

# Have a HEART Day

Residential School is an inhumanly cruelty in this world, it should have had never happened in this world. By drawing a heart created with a pair of different shaded hands, it represents the equality in different races and how diversity should be acceptable. Humans were all originated from central Africa. We just happen to evolve into different appearance features living in different countries. Why are we treating our own kinds differently? I hope, with my drawing of peace and love the society learnt how to treat humans equally in the future generations.

**LOVE**

from Byrne Creek Student.







**Have a Heart Day is a child and youth-led reconciliation event that brings together caring Canadians to help ensure First Nations children have the services they need to grow up safely at home, get a good education, be healthy, and be proud of who they are.**



The First Nations Caring Society video linked below is highly recommended as a discussion starter. Appropriate for all ages. Cindy Blackstock and others give background information on the inequalities between the educational funding for Indigenous students living on reserves and students in other schools in Canada. Students and teachers share their thoughts and experiences. This video is engaging, thought-provoking and inspiring. Access the video through either of the following:

[www.fncaringsociety.com/have-a-heart](http://www.fncaringsociety.com/have-a-heart) OR [www.youtube.com/watch?v=LchiS8eQ7UM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LchiS8eQ7UM)

More background information about Have a Heart Day is available at:

[fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Reconciliation%20is%20all%20of%20us%20%28Mar%202016%29.pdf](http://fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Reconciliation%20is%20all%20of%20us%20%28Mar%202016%29.pdf)

## **Postcards to the Prime Minister and local MLA**

(Postcard templates are attached in this booklet)

After showing and discussing the video, have students think about what message(s) they would like to send to Prime Minister Trudeau and to their local MLA (teachers to provide MLA for the particular area). Possible discussion questions include:

What are the most important ideas expressed in the video?

- Were you surprised by any of the information?
- What did you take away from the video?
- How could such unfairness exist in Canada?
- What do you think needs to happen in Canada? What can our leaders do to make sure all children receive an equal education?
- What are important messages we could send to our PM/MLA?

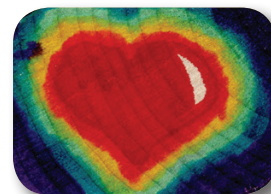
Show students the sample postcards attached and/or let them choose a blank postcard from ones the teacher has already copied onto cardstock. Explain that writing to our country's leaders is one of the most powerful ways to create change and to have our voices heard in a way that can make a real difference. Many children do not know the power their voices carry, especially to adults who may be far removed from children and their strong sense of fairness and inclusion. Before students start writing, teach/discuss the writing skills needed, such as:

- What kind of language should we use (formal vs informal, angry/joking/silly vs reasonable/serious/to the point? Postcards do not allow for lengthy writing, so the message(s) must be clear, concise and straightforward. Spend as much time as necessary brainstorming, writing sample responses up on the board or chart paper, clarifying the problem and possible solutions. Next, have students prepare drafts of their messages for teachers to check for accuracy and length of message. Remind students their message must fit on the postcard in the space provided. Remember, postage is free to the PM and MLAs. Student may like to design their own "heart stamp" on the postcard.
- We recommend writing the postcard before colouring/designing the postcards, so students aren't disappointed by having to redo artwork. The variety of postcard design allows for differences in choice, age, degree of individual design, and complexity. When postcards are all completed, teachers may wish to walk with students to a nearby mailbox. Otherwise, simply drop into mail (no stamps required!)

## Create a Heart Garden

Create a Heart Garden with your class—either as a wall display or in your school garden. As you will see in the linked pages, creating a Heart Garden with your students is a powerful way for students to express their strong feelings and thoughts to residential school survivors and the children who never came home. The following is taken from pages 130–132 of the BCTF’s *Gladys We Never Knew* module, available online at [www.bctf.ca/GladysWeNeverKnew/](http://www.bctf.ca/GladysWeNeverKnew/) and reprinted below for convenience:

**Note:** For teachers who wish to go deeper into this topic (and what makes a hero), see the rest of Lesson 8, Gladys Module (pages, 127 to 129). The video “Finding Heart” is linked via the tile on page 127. Like Dr. Bryce, who lost his job and reputation for speaking up about the horrific conditions in residential schools, we must speak up about inequality or injustice. Help students relate Bryce’s work to what we’re trying to do—empathize, speak up and make a difference. Even though it is very difficult in some situations (e.g., school playground, at home), we all must find the strength and courage to speak up against wrongs and help make things better. In this case, we are trying to make a difference by sending postcards to the people who are in a position to create change.





As a legacy to the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada, former students of Indian Residential Schools and their families, the TRC, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, and Project of Heart invite children and youth across the country to create Heart Gardens in their own schools and communities.

### What is a Heart Garden?

The idea behind the Heart Gardens is to honour children lost to the Indian Residential School (IRS) system. Create your own heart and decorate it in your own way to honour the unique spirit of each child lost to the IRS along with why reconciliation is important to you.



### Heart Garden Instructions

A heart pattern is attached as a separate page for your convenience. The pattern should be printed on letter size paper (8.5"x11") and printed twice to make sure that the hearts have two sides to glue on planting sticks after being decorated by children from across the country.

1. Teachers and others working with children are asked to produce one blank heart for each child. Consider what type of materials you wish to use depending on the plan for your garden. Will you use biodegradable materials and let the heart decompose into the garden; will you laminate and take the hearts out of the ground once the plants start to grow; will you use something that will be permanent?
2. After learning about the history and legacy of Indian Residential Schools, ask each child to decorate a heart to honor the life of a child who attended or was lost to residential schools. The children can decorate with any combination of images, colors, words, etc. that they feel would be appropriate to honour a child who attended the IRS system. *Remind the children that each heart will be unique just as each child who attended IRS was unique and precious.*
3. Cut out both hearts, colour, design, decorate carefully.
4. To make your heart flower, place a stick between the two hearts as the stem and glue the hearts together.
5. The stick should be able to be inserted in to the ground deep enough that it will hold up the heart in the Heart Garden and not be easily knocked over. Glue the stick in between both hearts.
6. If you are planting a permanent Heart Garden, put seeds at the bottom of each stick and create a plan to make sure the plants are cared for as they grow.
7. Please see First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada for more information.  
[fncaringsociety.com/honouring-memories-planting-dreams](http://fncaringsociety.com/honouring-memories-planting-dreams)

## HONOURING MEMORIES











## Relate to Valentines Day

Valentines Day is all about hearts, sharing love, and kindness. “Have a Heart Day” is about showing love and kindness to all children in Canada. It is the perfect day to remind all Canadians that we must be kind and caring to everyone. The heart is, after all, a symbol of love. This is a good opportunity to discuss symbolism. What else do hearts symbolize? What other symbols are there for love? Teachers might discuss literal vs. figurative language (e.g., idioms). Help students understand what an idiom is with “Have a Heart”. Do we really want people to have a heart in their hand? No ... lead students to understanding with other examples.

**Note:** The story, *You Hold Me Up*, mentioned below also allows for the opportunity to discuss figurative language.



## Relate to jump rope for heart

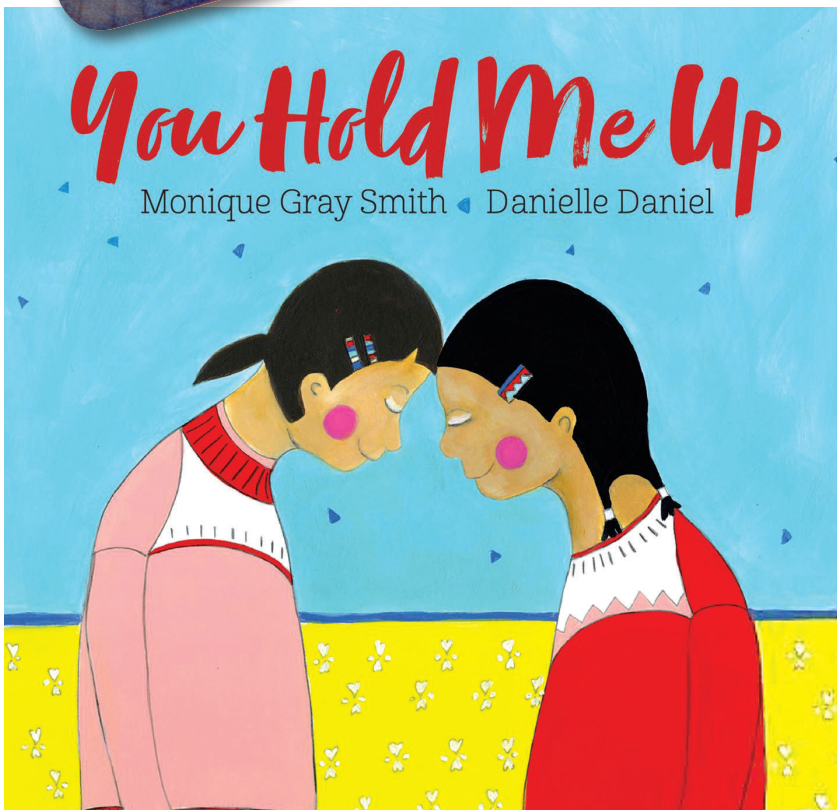
We are all busy learning and talking about looking after our hearts, so they are healthy. For example, we need to eat well and exercise to keep them physically healthy. However, what about looking after our hearts in other ways? How else do our hearts need to be healthy and happy? What about emotionally? Discuss ideas then ask students what they think would have happened to the hearts of the First Nations, Inuit and Metis children when they were sent away to residential schools? The hearts of their families? The hearts of Indigenous people in Canada who have been treated badly? The Indigenous children in schools on reserves today? Help students make connections. Perhaps some students will want to “jump” to help hearts heal and/or get healthier emotionally.



## Suggested book

*You Hold Me Up*, by Monique Gray Smith and Danielle Daniel

This is a story written for young children but can be used with older students to get across the simple but profound message that we all need to move forward together “in the spirit of reconciliation” (see dedication) by supporting and caring for each other. In other words, by “holding” each other up. Monique Gray Smith’s words are positive, heartwarming and gentle. The illustrations are appealing and engaging. Note how the characters lips are often **hearts** (fits with the theme!) and almost every picture includes nature. As the author says in a note to readers. “At its **heart**, it is a book about love, building relationships and fostering empathy.” Teachers may want to discuss this sentence and the rest of the Author’s Note further with older students. It is reprinted here for convenience:





## Author's Note

In Canada, we have a long history of legislation and policies that have affected the wellness of Indigenous children, families and communities. One of the most impactful was Indian Residential (boarding) Schools. For over 150 years, Indigenous children (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) as young as five were taken from their families, communities and cultures and placed in Residential Schools. At these schools, abuse was rampant. The children were separated from their siblings, forbidden to speak their languages or practice their culture, often fed little or rotten food and were denied necessities.

With this book, we are embarking on a journey of healing and Reconciliation. I wrote it to remind us of our common humanity and the importance of holding each other up with respect and dignity. I hope it is a foundational book for our littlest citizens. A book that encourages dialogue among children, their families, their care providers and their educators. At its heart, it is a book about love, building relationships and fostering empathy.

With respect and love,

*Monique Gray Smith*

## Other Suggested Activities:

- Decorate heart-shaped cookies.
- Make felt/cloth hearts filled with sage, sweet grass or straw with a bit of sage for the scent.
- Put up posters around your school encouraging others to take part in Have a Heart Day.
- Put up a hallway display explaining what Have a Heart Day is about.
- Put up a hallway display highlighting some of your students' responses/work.





### Additional ideas for secondary:

- Have secondary students meet with local elementary students and create heart gardens together. Consider making the hearts from corrugated plastic. (with permanent markers) If hearts are going outside, high school student could do one side, elementary the other or they could share two hearts with each student doing one side of each heart.
- Create a very large heart mural composed of the smaller hearts created by students.
- Have your class create their own heart-shaped Valentines cards on pink or red paper. Have them write to the PM and/or local MLA. Put class set into large envelope and mail when done. Remember, postage is free!
- Use the following poem by E.E. Cummings as a discussion/project starter.

### I Carry Your Heart with Me (I carry it in)

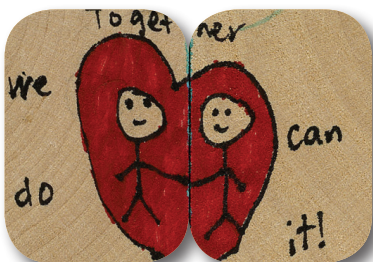
i carry your heart with me (i carry it in my heart)  
i am never without it (anywhere i go you go, my dear; and whatever is done  
by only me is your doing, my darling)

i fear

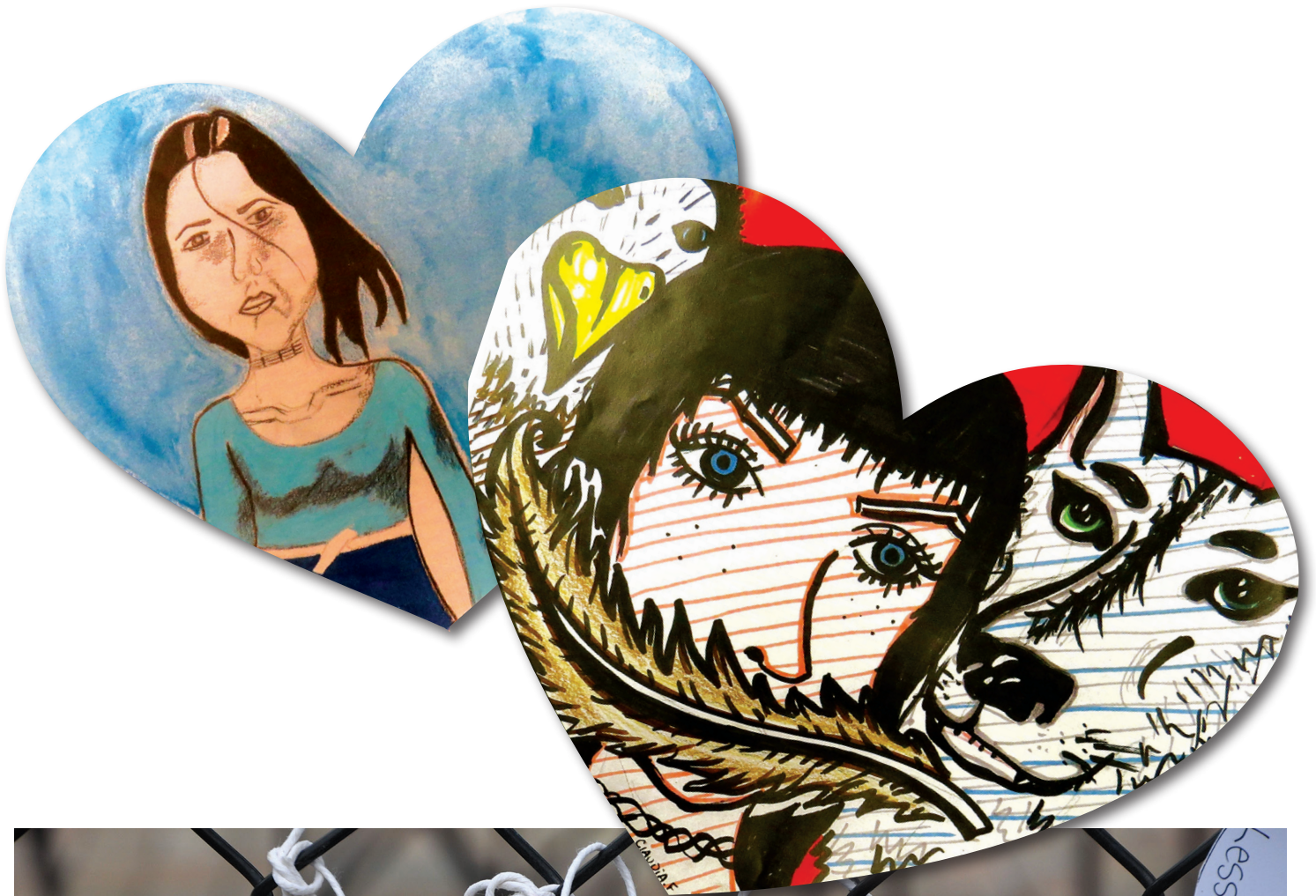
no fate (or you are my fate, my sweet) i want  
no world (for beautiful you are my world, my true)  
and it's you are whatever a moon has always meant  
and whatever a sun will always sing is you

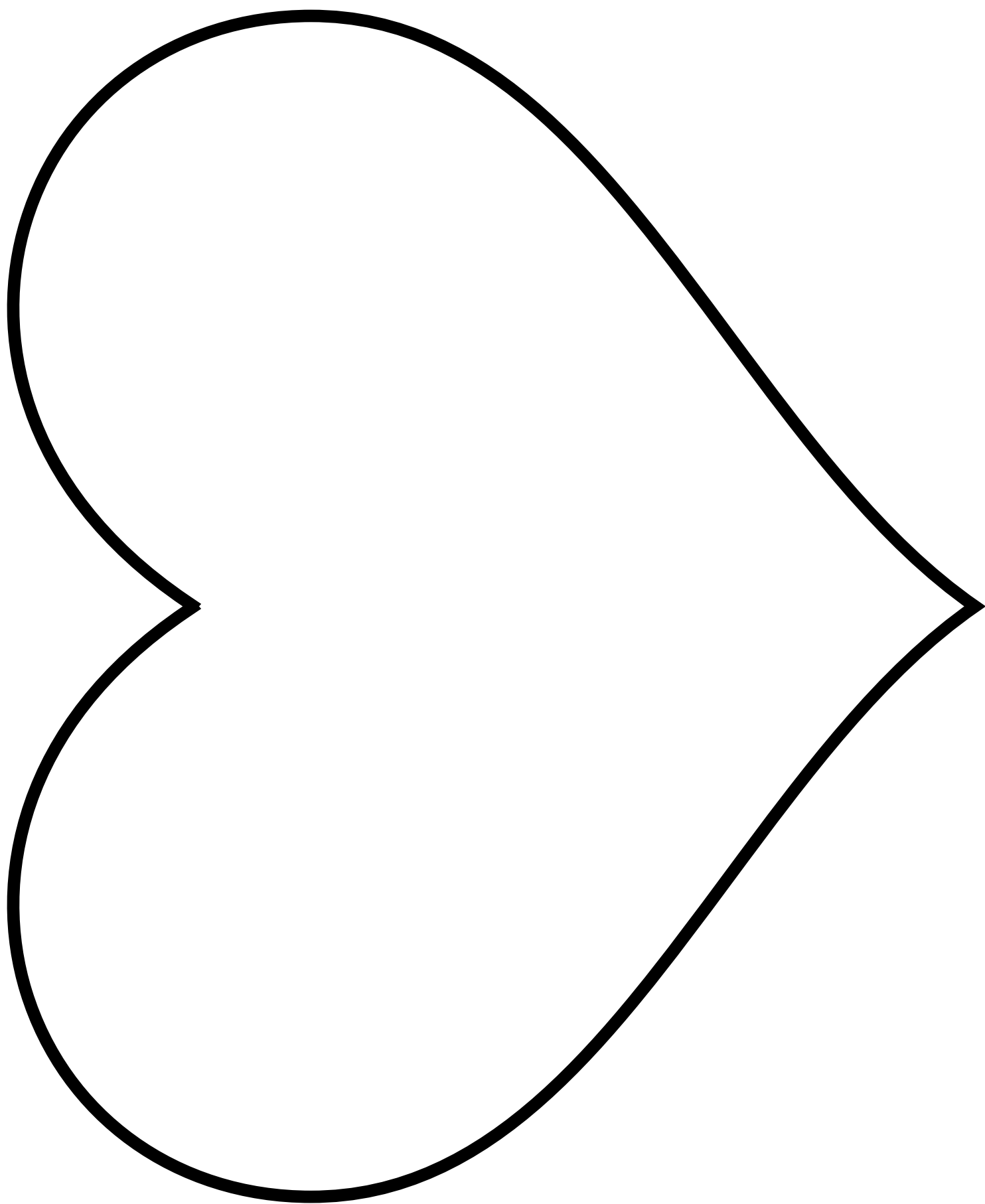
here is the deepest secret nobody knows  
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud  
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows  
higher than soul can hope, or mind can hide)  
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart (i carry it in my heart)













Dear PM

Name:

School:

City:

To:

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau,  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Dear PM

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School:

City:












To:

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HAVE A           

HEART



Dear MLA

Name:

School:

City:

To:

Dear

Name:

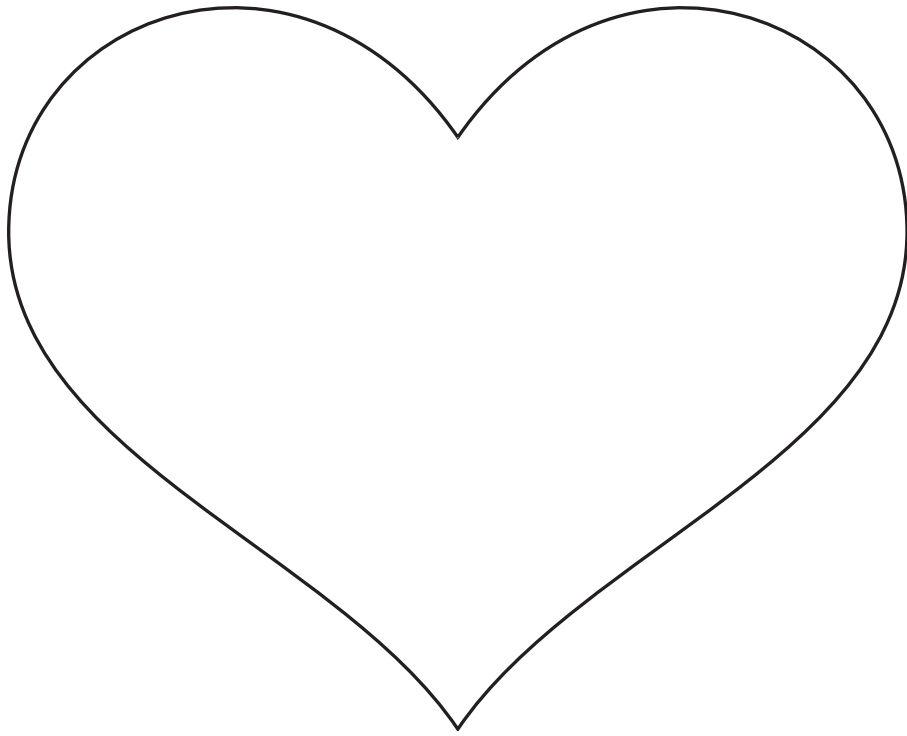
School:

City:

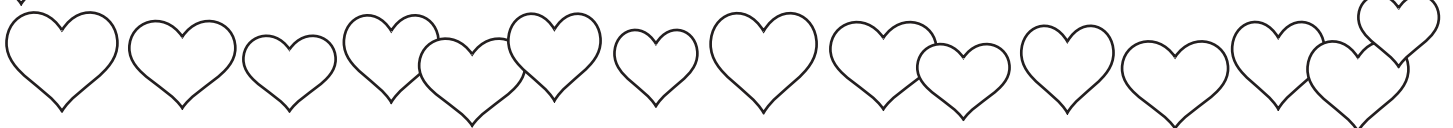
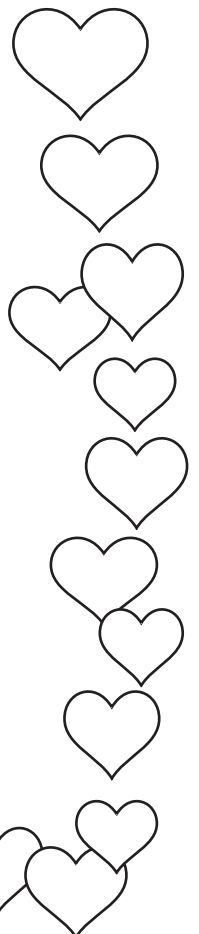
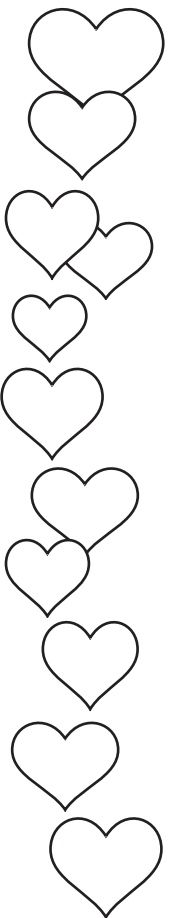
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Have a HEART



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