

## HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN “BRING YOUR MP TO SCHOOL DAY”

Thank you for choosing to participate in Bring Your MP to School Day! We're happy to have you joining us. Please use this sheet to help you prepare and achieve the best possible engagement from your students.

### Confirm your School's Participation

If you haven't already done so, register your event online at <http://www.unicef.ca/en/bring-your-mp-to-school-day-schools>.

We invite school administration to advise UNICEF Canada if there are particular school or school board/district policies UNICEF Canada should be aware of in relation to this activity.

### Plan for the Visit

Once your school has registered with UNICEF Canada to participate, share these instructions and the Event Kit for Schools resources (available at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd)) with the administration and other educators.

- Determine which students, class or classes will participate in the lesson plan and activity
- Raise awareness about the activity
  - Print the provided promotional poster ([www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd)) and post it around the school to spread awareness about the activity
  - Raise awareness digitally through your school's website and social media accounts using #timetobeheard @UNICEFCanada
  - Distribute materials about the Convention on the Rights of the Child throughout classrooms and among students (posters and bookmarks can be printed from [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd) or requested from [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca))

### Prepare your Students for the Visit

- Talk with students in their classes about the reasons we celebrate National Child Day; conduct a lesson on children's rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child – free lesson plan ideas and activities can be found in the Event Kit for Schools at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd)!
- Talk with students about the role of federal Parliament and MPs. Links to the Government of Canada and Parliament websites with child-friendly information can be found at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd)
- Work with students to prepare their questions and thoughts for the MP. **Students should ask themselves what issues they are worried about, what kind of changes**

**they want to see in their communities and the world, and what they want decision-makers to do about them.** To help them decide what to ask, try asking them:

- **What would you like to tell your MP about the issues that concern you, locally? Nationally? Globally?**
  - **Do you wonder what your MP or the Government of Canada is doing to support children's rights? To affect the issues which concern you?**
  - **Is there something you want adults and decision-makers to know about the children and youth of today?**
- Be creative! Students can brainstorm alternative ways of sharing their views and concerns with MPs. They might wish to create a mural, act out a skit, or write a mock speech from the throne.
  - The teacher can review the questions to ensure they are appropriate for the activity and the MP's capacity to respond, and discuss any concerns with the students.

### **Day of the Visit**

- Invite all participating students to meet 30 minutes early to review and discuss the "Student Tips" together before the MP arrives (see below).
- Have a staff and student greet the MP at the head office twenty minutes before the event is scheduled to begin.

### **After the Visit**

- Discuss the visit with students in their classrooms.
- Stay tuned! Your feedback on this initiative will be very helpful for future planning efforts. UNICEF Canada will contact you the day after your visit for the following feedback:
  - Three "highlights" and/or key points raised during the visit (e.g., the students were very interested to learn about what happens on the "Hill", the students were keen to discuss health and health care, etc.).
  - Three quotations from students (please provide each student's first name, age and grade, if available).
  - Three photos from the visit and/or links to videos, as well as photo release form.
  - The agenda from the visit.
  - A short evaluation survey on the process to gather suggestions for next year.
- Consider involving students in writing a letter to the editor of your local paper following the event to share the highlights.
- Send a thank you letter to your MP and share any photos or video of the event with them

- Share photos and key messages from the event on your school website and social media channels. Remember to tag @UNICEFCanada and #timetobeheard

### **A few Tips for Educators**

- Be sensitive to issues that might be raised by students – students might ask questions that relate to very personal matters or might disclose a rights violation that has happened to them. Using the Event Kit megaphone image to engage students in writing out questions in advance can help avoid this kind of risk.
  - In the case of a rights violation, be sure that the child's privacy and best interests are protected and provide access to a counselor immediately so that he/she can receive support and so that disclosures can be followed up with appropriately

### **A few Tips for Students**

- Use this opportunity to:
  - Learn about the role of federal Parliament and your local elected MP (Member of Parliament), your representative in Ottawa in the federal government
  - Find out what National Child Day means and about the universal human rights you have – learn more about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child before the visit with your MP
  - Think about the issues that matter to you, in your community; in your country; in the world. Ask your MP about the Government of Canada's efforts. Tell your MP what you want him/her to know to help represent your views in Parliament.
- Speak loudly and clearly so that everyone can hear.
- Remember – your opinion matters!

For more information please visit [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd)



## SAMPLE AGENDA FOR “BRING YOUR MP TO SCHOOL DAY”

### 1. Welcome - from Principal (5 minutes)

*Options to consider:*

- Engage a student in sharing the welcome comments with the Principal

### 2. Introduction to MP – from Master of Ceremony (MC) for the visit (5 minutes)

### 3. Introductory remarks – from MP (5 minutes)

### 4. Question and Answer period – students to pose questions and discuss views with MP, moderated by the MC (40 minutes)

*Options to consider:*

- From class preparations, students with prepared questions (generated by their class and written down) take turns asking them and hearing the MP's answers
- Consider ending with a brief period of additional free-ranging questions and comments
- The MC should ensure an ongoing mix of questions from the different grades/classes
- Permit the MP to offer final remarks and an expression of thanks

### 5. Wrap up and thank you – from Principal (5 minutes)

*Options to consider:*

- Engage a student in sharing the wrap-up with the Principal

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR “BRING YOUR MP TO SCHOOL DAY”

### 1. Which schools and MPs will participate and how were they chosen?

Thank you for your interest in “Bring your MP to School Day”! Participation in this event is open to all schools and MPs across Canada. “Bring your MP to School Day” is a non-partisan initiative, as UNICEF is a non-partisan organization. This initiative is open to all political parties represented in the House of Commons. UNICEF Canada aims to have schools participate from across the country, in the ridings of various political parties.

We encourage all participants to initiate their own activities, and to register their participation and access supportive resources by emailing [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) and visiting [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd). In case you require assistance, or have any additional questions, please contact us at [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) or 416 482 4444 ext. 8848.

### 2. I am an interested MP. How can I participate?

We are pleased to have as many MPs participate as possible. A downloadable Event Kit for “Bring your MP to School Day” at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd) contains materials to support interested MPs to approach a school of their choice in their ridings and discuss the initiative. If your office would like assistance identifying a school in your riding, or if you have any additional questions, please contact us at: [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) or 416 482 4444 ext. 8848.

### 3. Our school is interested in participating. How can we get started?

We are pleased to have as many schools participate as possible. A downloadable Event Kit for “Bring your MP to School Day” at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd) contains materials to support interested schools to approach their MPs and discuss the initiative. You can find your MP by entering your school postal code on the Parliament of Canada webpage at: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC>

UNICEF Canada expects school administration to participate according to any applicable school and/or school board/district policy. If your school would like assistance, or if you have any additional questions, please contact us at: [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) or 416 482 4444 ext. 8848.

### 4. What resources are available to participating schools and MPs?

UNICEF Canada offers an Event Kit for participating schools and MPs which can be downloaded at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd).

The Event Kit contains helpful information, including:

- **An Invitation** to join, plus **How to Participate** and **Best Practices** Guides
- **Introductory Letters** for MPs to send to Schools, and vice versa
- **Media kits**
- **Resources** to educate students about the role of Parliament and their MP and the meaning of National Child Day

## 5. Can the event be publicized through media?

Schools and MPs may wish to publicize their involvement in this year's activities, with approval from both the school and the MP. Schools and MPs may also use their own communications (Web site, Facebook, Twitter) to raise awareness about National Child Day and the "Bring your MP to School Day".

UNICEF Canada also invites participating schools to provide permission to UNICEF Canada for the use of any photography/videography taken by participants at the event, and the use of students' quotations for potential use in UNICEF Canada's communications.

Photographs/videos that feature children's faces/identifying features must be accompanied by UNICEF Canada's release form (available by emailing [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca)).

It should be mutually understood that the use of quotations and photographs/video should not be used for advancing particular political platforms but will be used in the spirit of raising awareness of National Child Day and students' civic participation. Following the school visit, UNICEF Canada will issue a press release on November 20 to raise additional awareness about Bring Your MP to School Day and the importance of National Child Day.

## 6. What is National Child Day?

National Child Day has been celebrated in Canada since it was officially declared with the *Child Day Act* in 1993 to commemorate the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The day coincides with Universal Children's Day, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1954 to encourage all countries to institute a day to promote mutual exchange and understanding among children and to take action to promote the well-being of the world's children. In addition to UNICEF Canada's efforts to promote National Child Day, it is also celebrated widely across the country and promoted by civil society organizations and various levels of government. For more information visit: [unicef.ca/ncd](http://unicef.ca/ncd) or [childday.gc.ca](http://childday.gc.ca)

## 7. Why did UNICEF Canada choose "Bring Your MP to School Day" as its theme for National Child Day?

Building on UNICEF Canada's historic role in commemorating National Child Day, we have launched a "Bring your MP to School Day" initiative so that children's voices, concerns and interests find expression in and enjoy meaningful attention from Parliamentarians. The link between Members of Parliament and their constituents is at the core of the representative function of Parliament. Engaging with children and youth – generally a quarter of the population – helps inform decisions that affect this vulnerable but non-voting population, and advances the civic education of Canada's youngest citizens.

## 8. Who should I contact for more information about this initiative?

For more information about this initiative, please contact UNICEF Canada at: [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) or **416 482 4444 ext. 8848**. You can also visit our National Child Day website for helpful information and a downloadable Event Kit at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd).



### TEMPLATE – LETTER FROM SCHOOL INVITING MP TO VISIT

Dear <Name> ,

We are writing to invite you to join us at a “Bring your MP to School Day” event in your riding, at <school name>, between November 7 – 11. Our students and staff would welcome this opportunity to celebrate National Child Day 2016 with you.

As you may know, National Child Day was officially declared with the *Child Day Act* in 1993 to honour the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. “Bring your MP to School Day” is a UNICEF Canada initiative to commemorate National Child Day and ensure that children’s voices, concerns and interests enjoy meaningful attention from Parliamentarians.

As the youngest Canadian citizens, our students want MPs to know that they are interested in a dialogue with their representatives in Parliament. “Bring your MP to School Day” is an opportunity to engage in a meaningful discussion and learn from each other. Engaging with children and youth – about a quarter of the population – can help inform decisions you make that affect this often vulnerable but non-voting population. This event also advances the civic education of Canada’s youngest citizens.

Our school would like to discuss the potential to host a one-hour visit by our MP to celebrate National Child Day and bring Parliament to children and youth in our community. Please do let us know if you would be interested in participating and, if so, some possible dates and times when you would be available in the week of 7 -11 November.

We look forward to hearing from you. If you have any queries please contact <insert contact details here>. This initiative is led by UNICEF Canada, and you can find more information at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd).

Many thanks from all of us.

<School Name>



it's our  
time

TO BE  
HEARD!

unicef  
canada 



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# Bring Your MP to School Day in celebration of National Child Day

**WHO?**

**WHAT?**

A celebration of National Child Day and an opportunity for MPs to hear from children and youth in their ridings

**WHEN?**

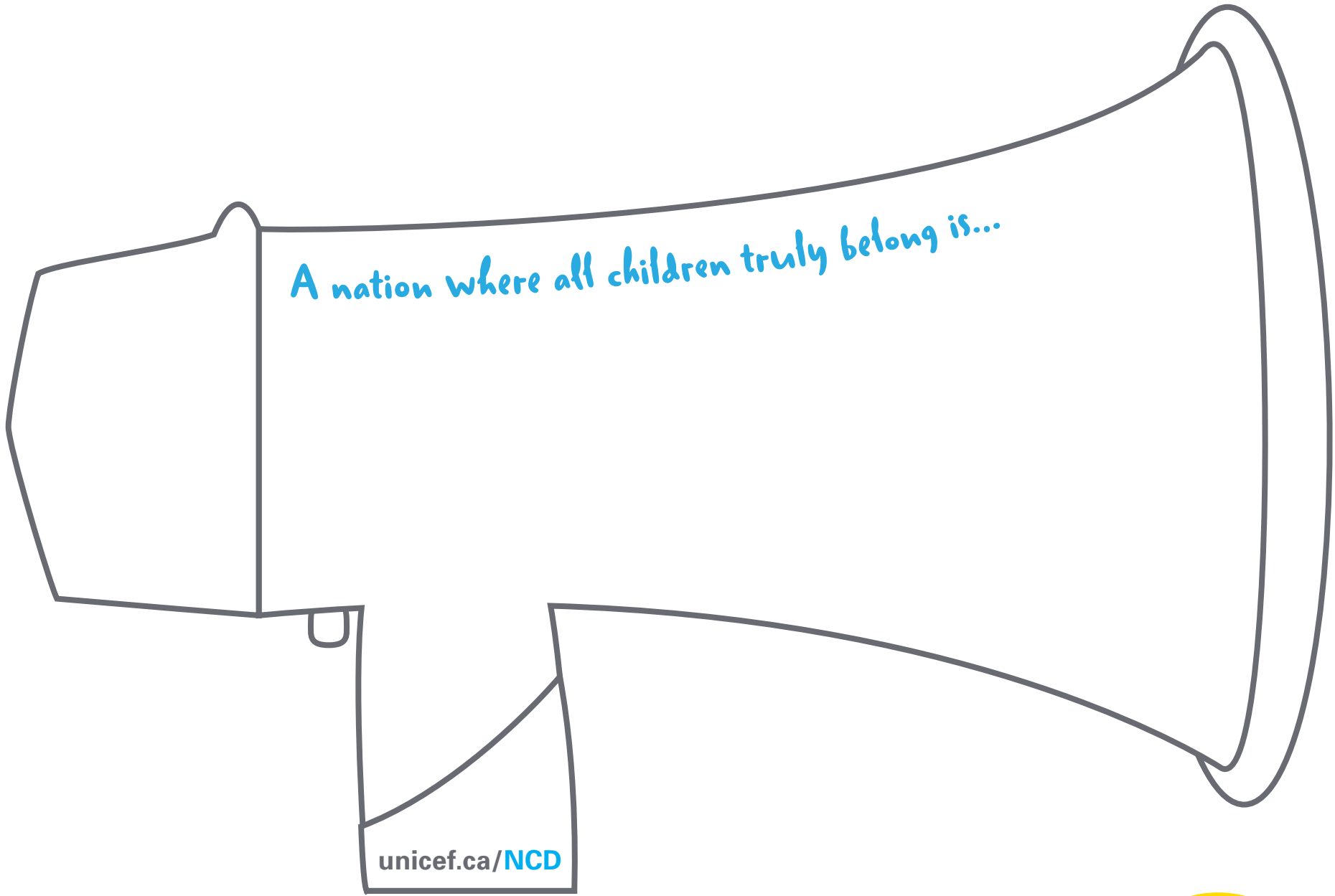
**WHERE?**

**WHY?**

To celebrate National Child Day and hear from Canada's youngest citizens by "bringing Parliament to children and youth"

[unicef.ca/NCD](http://unicef.ca/NCD)





A nation where all children truly belong is...

unicef.ca/NCD



## SCHOOL MEDIA KIT CONTENTS

1. Tips for Media Engagement: Schools
2. Sample Media Release for Schools
3. Social Media Tip Sheet
4. Stump Story

## TIPS FOR MEDIA ENGAGEMENT: SCHOOLS

If participating schools and MPs wish to invite media to attend UNICEF Canada's "Bring your MP to School Day," please refer to the tips below.

### **Before your visit:**

- Contact the MP's office to ensure that everyone is willing to engage with media at the event.
- Identify who will be the adult spokesperson on behalf of the school. Prepare volunteering students for interviews if consent is obtained and the students are informed of the purpose and the content in advance. Develop 2-3 talking points to communicate to a journalist during an interview.
- Obtain written permission from students and guardians to collect photos, video footage and/or quotes from students, if not already provided in school waivers/release forms. Follow school board policies for media engagement.
- Determine the appropriate person to contact at the media outlet.
  - If contacting a newspaper, connect with the assignment editor.
  - If contacting a radio or television outlet, connect with the producer.
- Make the students comfortable by speaking with them before the journalist arrives. Let them know what to expect.

### **During your visit:**

- If student volunteers participate in interviews, a responsible adult should be present during all student interviews and intervene as needed to ensure a safe and appropriate experience.

### **After your visit:**

- Thank the journalist for attending the event.
- Share the media coverage with students and parents. This can be done on your website and in your next newsletter, for example.
- Share photos and quotes from your event with UNICEF Canada at [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca). UNICEF Canada can share these with our networks through our website, social media and other communications, and with media on November 20 to raise additional awareness about UNICEF Canada's "Bring your MP to School Day."

If you have any questions about media engagement, please contact [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca).

## SAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE FOR SCHOOLS “BRING YOUR MP TO SCHOOL DAY”

### CELEBRATE NATIONAL CHILD DAY WITH <SCHOOL>, <MP> AND UNICEF CANADA

<CITY>, November <day>, 2016 – To celebrate National Child Day, <MP name> visited students at <school name> as part of UNICEF Canada’s “Bring your MP to School Day.” The initiative gave young Canadians and their elected representatives the opportunity to participate in a meaningful discussion and learn from each other.

“It’s encouraging to see MPs engage children in discussions on issues that concern them,” said David Morley, President and CEO, UNICEF Canada. “UNICEF Canada’s “Bring your MP to School Day” is a great opportunity for students to share their opinions and for elected officials to hear first hand from our youngest citizens. For many students this may be their first experience with a parliamentarian and we hope it is inspiring for both the students and the MPs.”

At <school name>, students addressed issues such as: <conversation topics>. An interesting exchange occurred when <comments/observations from the event>.

<Quote from a student reflecting on what he/she liked most about UNICEF Canada’s “Bring your MP to School Day” – with appropriate permissions in place; use first name and grade level.>

For a young person, having a serious conversation with an MP can instil or reinforce the belief that he/she can influence government’s decision-making on matters affecting his/her future. Under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to express their views and be heard on the issues affecting them.

<Quote from the principal/teacher reflecting on what “Bring your MP to School Day” meant to the class/school.>

Engaging with children and youth – who make up about a quarter of the population – helps inform decisions that affect this often vulnerable but non-voting population, and advances the civic education of Canada’s youngest citizens.

To learn more about National Child Day or UNICEF Canada’s “Bring your MP to School Day,” visit [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd). Canadians can also celebrate National Child Day by joining the Twitter conversation with the hashtag #timetobeheard.

For more information, contact:

<School representative’s name>

<School name>

<Telephone number>

<Email address>

## SOCIAL MEDIA TIP SHEET

### GENERAL TIPS

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Follow [@UNICEFCanada](https://twitter.com/UNICEFCanada)

- Re-tweet @UNICEFCanada and thank those who re-tweet your messages.
- Include the campaign hashtag #timetobeheard in your tweets.
- See which topics are trending to join relevant conversations. The Twitter community may adopt a hashtag for National Child Day that you can include in your tweets.
- Provide a link to the campaign for more information ([unicef.ca/ncd](http://unicef.ca/ncd)).



Like us at [facebook.com/unicefcanada](https://facebook.com/unicefcanada)

- Follow UNICEF Canada on Facebook for updates and content to re-broadcast.
- Tag UNICEF Canada in your pictures or posts.
- Encourage your community to “Like” or “Share” posts.
- Provide a link to the campaign for more information ([unicef.ca/ncd](http://unicef.ca/ncd)).

### IDEAS

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- Re-tweet messages from the MP visiting your school.
- Mention the MP in your tweet by including his/her Twitter handle.
- Tweet issues/questions that were raised by students and any new insights.
- Ask your school board to share your tweets.

### Sample Tweets

- @UNICEFCanada is sending <MP Twitter handle> to school to celebrate National Child Day with our students. It's their #timetobeheard!
- It's @UNICEFCanada's Bring your MP to School Day! Students look forward to speaking with their MP. It's their #timetobeheard! <http://unicef.ca/ncd>
- November 20 is National Child Day. See how our students celebrate with <MP Twitter handle> & @UNICEFCanada. #timetobeheard <link to photo>
- Young people have a right to be heard. Join us & @UNICEFCanada to celebrate National Child Day: <http://unicef.ca/ncd> #timetobeheard
- Today is National Child Day. Help to empower young people by giving them a voice. It's their #timetobeheard. <http://unicef.ca/ncd>

### Sample Facebook posts

- Can you guess who this student is? Here's a hint: (s)he's an MP!

- **<MP name>** will be visiting our students on **<date>** as part of UNICEF Canada's Bring your MP to School Day. It's their time to be heard.
- The school visit is part of our celebrations for National Child Day. To learn more about this special day, visit [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd).
- Today is National Child Day! Join us by empowering students to use their voice. It's their time to be heard.
- Help celebrate National Child Day with UNICEF Canada: [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd)

## STUMP STORY

### CELEBRATE NATIONAL CHILD DAY WITH <MP>, <SCHOOL> AND UNICEF CANADA

National Child Day is celebrated on November 20 in Canada. To mark this special occasion, UNICEF Canada organized its annual “Bring your MP to School Day,” connecting members of Parliament with schools across the country. Students were given the opportunity to discuss the issues that matter to them while learning about the role of Canada’s federal parliamentarians. MPs engaged in conversation and discovered how the students’ views could inform their work.

<MP> visited <school name> on <date>. Embracing the theme of “It’s our time to be heard,” the students discussed <topics>. For many students, this visit was their first experience with a parliamentarian and their first opportunity to influence government decisions that affect them. It was an inspiring exchange for both students and MPs.

To learn more about National Child Day or UNICEF Canada’s “Bring your MP to School Day”, visit [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd).



## TEACHING ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

A selection of child-friendly lesson plans and resources to teach Canadian students about children's rights

### Lesson Plans + Activities

It's Only Right – activity guide + lesson plans to teach about rights:

<http://www.unicef.ca/en/teachers/article/it%E2%80%99s-only-right>

Teaching for Children's Rights – A Card & Activity Kit on Rights, Wants + Needs:

<http://rrscanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/rights-wants-and-needs-activity-kit.pdf>

- Additional Cards at: <http://rrscanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/rights-wants-and-needs-supplementary-cards.pdf>

Bringing Children's Rights Alive – lesson plans with curriculum connections for Grade 6 students in Canada to learn about their rights: <http://rrscanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/bringing-childrens-rights-alive.pdf>

A lesson plan on creating a classroom charter:

<http://rrscanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/classroom-charters.pdf>

### Conventions and Declarations in Child-Friendly Language

Pamphlet on the Convention of the Rights of the Child in child-friendly language:

<http://rrscanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/05/child-friendly-crc-pamphlet.pdf>

A first in Canada: The Recommendations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Youth-Friendly Language!

[http://www.provincialadvocate.on.ca/documents/en/concluding\\_observations\\_in\\_youth\\_friendly\\_language\\_EN.pdf](http://www.provincialadvocate.on.ca/documents/en/concluding_observations_in_youth_friendly_language_EN.pdf)

Know Your Rights! The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples for indigenous adolescents: <http://rrscanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/know-your-rights-un-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.pdf>



It's About Ability: Learning Guide on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:  
[http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Its\\_About\\_Ability\\_Learning\\_Guide\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Its_About_Ability_Learning_Guide_EN.pdf)

### **Additional Resources**

A list of children's books about children's rights and social justice:  
<http://rrscanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/childrens-rights-and-social-justice-booklist.pdf>

Cartoon videos illustrating children's rights: [http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/433\\_cartoons.php](http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/433_cartoons.php)

