

## 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)

