

Canada Child Rights and Business Assessment

A guide for Canadian businesses on addressing children's considerations and aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals



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Any references made to a particular company do not imply endorsement of that company by UNICEF Canada or Global Compact Network Canada. Rather, these are intended to provide examples of how child rights are currently being addressed by companies, which others can learn from, adapt, and/or replicate.

Introduction by the Working Group

Children's rights are everybody's business. Respecting and supporting children's rights are also good for business. As Canadian companies with operations at home and abroad, we recognize that over the lifetime of our businesses, our youngest stakeholders might be our most important. Yet we also recognize that child rights and wellbeing can sometimes be neglected. In collaboration with UNICEF Canada and the Global Compact Network Canada, this assessment provides a snapshot of how Canadian businesses are currently integrating children's considerations into their responsible business conduct. Across ten key areas, we look at the impacts of business on children and examples of how Canadian companies are addressing these impacts. We see how widespread these efforts are across ten different sectors, by surveying public references to child rights issues in the annual and sustainability reporting of leading Canadian companies on the S&P/TSX 60 Index of the Toronto Stock Exchange. We map how these issues align with three key frameworks: the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact (UNGC), the Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), and the Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-being. This assessment aims not merely to inform, but to inspire Canadian businesses to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for how they address their salient impacts on children. To integrate children's considerations into their policy commitments, due diligence processes, and grievance mechanisms. To regularly and publicly communicate on their efforts to do so as part of their UNGC Communications on Progress and annual and sustainability reporting. Only then will we reach a tipping point where child rights integration will transform from being a niche issue for pioneering companies to being core business for all.

UNICEF Canada and Global Compact Network Canada would like to thank the members of the Working Group for their input and feedback, including the Bank of Montreal, Intact Insurance, the Mining Association of Canada, Lundin Foundation, and Kinross Gold. We would also like to thank the companies that reviewed and granted permission to reproduce examples.

Survey methodology

Global Compact Network Canada identified public references to child rights issues in the annual and sustainability reporting of leading Canadian companies on the [S&P/TSX 60 Index](#) of the Toronto Stock Exchange. These companies are grouped by sector as defined by the [Global Industry Classification Standard](#) (GICS). At the time of the survey in Summer 2020, the companies captured by the S&P/TSX 60 were:

- **Financials (11):** Bank of Montreal, Brookfield Asset Management, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Manulife Financial Corporation, National Bank of Canada, Power Corporation of Canada, Royal Bank of Canada, Scotiabank, Sun Life Financial, Thomson Reuters Corporation and Toronto Dominion Bank.
- **Materials (10):** Agnico Eagle Mines, Barrick Gold, CCL Industries, First Quantum Minerals, Franco-Nevada Corporation, Kinross Gold, Kirkland Lake Gold, Nutrien, Teck Resources, and Wheaton Precious Metals.
- **Energy (9):** Cameco, Canadian Natural Resources, Cenovus Energy, Enbridge, Imperial Oil, Inter Pipeline, Pembina Pipeline, Suncor Energy and TC Energy.
- **Consumer Staples (7):** Alimentation Couche-Tard, Dollarama, George Weston, Loblaws, Metro, Restaurant Brands International and Saputo.
- **Information Technology (6):** BlackBerry, CGI Incorporated, Constellation Software, Magna International, Shopify Incorporated and Open Text Corporation.
- **Industrials (6):** Bombardier, Brookfield Property Partners, Canadian National Railway, Canadian Pacific Railway, SNC Lavalin and Waste Connections.
- **Communication Services (4):** Bell Canada, Rogers Communications, Shaw Communications and Telus Corporation.
- **Utilities (3):** Brookfield Infrastructure Partners, Emera Incorporated and Fortis Incorporated.
- **Health Care (2):** Bausch Health Companies and Canopy Growth Corporation.
- **Consumer Discretionary (2):** Gildan Activewear and Canadian Tire Corporation.

Please note that the composition of the S&P/TSX 60 may change over time, and that the examples cited in this assessment do not necessarily come from S&P/TSX 60 companies.

Child Rights and Well-being in Canada and the World

The 1989 UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) outlines a comprehensive framework of 42 substantive rights that children have in order to address their specific vulnerabilities and entitlements, including guiding principles on non-discrimination; ensuring the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child. It defines a child as any person under the age of 18. The Government of Canada signed the CRC in 1990 and ratified it in 1991.

There have been impressive gains for children over the past three decades: the global under-five mortality rate has more than halved; the proportion of children not getting enough of the right food to eat has decreased by nearly half; and a third of the world's population now have access to clean drinking water. However, great challenges remain: a quarter of a billion children are still out of school; the most vulnerable girls in many countries are still at risk of child marriage; and climate change is disproportionately affecting children. The COVID-19 pandemic is also threatening and in some cases reversing progress towards the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives of everyone.

In Canada, governments have introduced independent advocates for children in most provinces and territories, some have adopted Child Rights Impact Assessments, and some have established Child Friendly Cities. However, Canada is not yet a global leader on realizing child rights and wellbeing. UNICEF reports have revealed that countries that have embedded the CRC more expansively in their governments, with greater investment and more robust public policies to

support strong and equitable early childhood development, tend to have happier, healthier children.

The *Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-being*, led by UNICEF Canada, measures levels, inequalities and trends in the state of children and youth. It tracks 125 indicators across nine dimensions of the lives of children and youth, from birth to age 18, using the most recent, population-level, statistical data. Sixty per cent of the indicators are based on how children and youth report their own well-being. Thirty per cent of the indicators measure Canada's achievement of the SDG targets for children. Many young people and more than 90 adult experts with diverse perspectives contributed to the development of the Index, in collaboration with the Canadian Index of Wellbeing based at the University of Waterloo.

The inaugural 2019 report was a profile of children and youth that provided a baseline from which future reports will track progress. The Index complements the UNICEF Report Cards that look at life for children in the world's rich countries. **In 2020, Canada ranked 30th among 38 rich countries in the well-being of children and youth under 18.** The only two indicators in which Canada was in the top third were in children's academic achievement and exposure to air pollution. Canada fell below average in more than half the measures of child well-being. Canada ranked lowest in child survival (including teen suicide and child mortality), health (including immunization and unhealthy weight) and children's overall life satisfaction. The widest gaps between Canada and the best-performing countries existed in bringing down rates of child poverty and youth exclusion from school and work. Incremental public policy advances have not achieved progress for children.



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"There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and want and that they grow up in peace."

Kofi Annan, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate,
7th Secretary-General of the United Nations

Business and Child Rights

Children under 18 account for almost one fifth of Canada's population, one third of the world's population, and in many countries almost half of the national population. It is inevitable that Canadian businesses, whether small or large, will interact with and have an effect on the lives of children both directly and indirectly. Children are key stakeholders of business – as consumers, family members of employees, young workers, community members, and as future employees and leaders. Children's rights are therefore impacted by company policies, products, operations, sourcing activities and business relationships. Yet beyond child labour and philanthropic corporate social responsibility, the broader impacts of business on children are often overlooked.

In the 2011 UN *Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (UNGPs), which were unanimously endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council, the need to pay particular attention to children was embedded across three pillars. Under the state duty to protect human rights, Principle 3 requires governments to recognize the specific challenges that may be faced by children. Under the corporate responsibility to respect human rights, Principle 12 requires businesses to respect the specific human rights of children. Under the obligation to provide access to remedy, Principle 26 requires particular attention be given to the rights and needs of groups such as children at each stage of the remedial process. This is reinforced by the 2011 *OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*. Section IV requires enterprises to respect the specific human rights of children. The Government of Canada has endorsed the UNGPs and OECD Guidelines, as well as the integration of children's considerations, in their key responsible business conduct frameworks and *guidelines for Canadian companies active abroad*.

UNICEF, the UN Global Compact, and Save the Children built on the UNGPs and consulted with companies and young people about the impacts of business on children. The result was the launch of the *Children's Rights and Business Principles* (CRBPs) in 2012. Using the framework of the UNGPs, Principle 1 provides a general obligation for businesses to respect and support children's rights by integrating them into their policy commitments, due diligence processes, and grievance mechanisms. Principles 2-10 identify the key areas of impact that business can have on children in the workplace, marketplace, community, and environment. The CRBPs provide the framework for this assessment. The Government of Canada endorsed the CRBPs at the Canadian release in 2014, and promotes them to Canadian companies doing business abroad.

The CRBPs strengthen the UN Global Compact's mission in supporting companies to do business responsibly by aligning with the *UNGC Ten Principles* on human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption. UNGC Principles 1 and 2 are particularly relevant to children's rights, and mandate that businesses should support and respect the protection of international human rights and ensure they are not complicit in human rights abuses. The UNGC also takes strategic action to promote collaboration and innovation on broader strategic frameworks such as the SDGs, which cannot be achieved without making inclusive economic, social and environmental progress for children. Responsible business conduct using these two approaches are inseparably linked and mutually reinforcing, with strong potential for mutual advocacy and realization of children's rights.



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"Children are among the most marginalized and vulnerable members of society and can be disproportionately, severely, and permanently impacted by business activities, operations, and relationships."

Professor John Ruggie, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Business and Human Rights

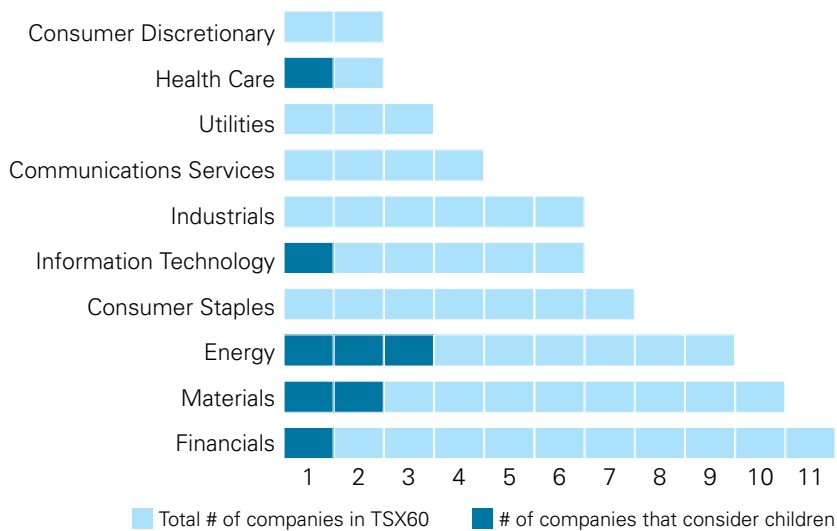


Principle 1: Commit to Respect and Support Child Rights

The responsibility to respect and commitment to support children's rights can be integrated within company statements of business principles, codes of conduct and other values-related corporate commitments and policies. This commitment can also take the form of a stand-alone public statement.

In most scenarios, companies can integrate children's considerations into their broader human rights impact assessment processes, but in some cases, companies might consider conducting a stand-alone child rights impact assessment. Consultations with and about children can be invaluable to informing these efforts and understanding their concerns. If a business generally undertakes stakeholder and community consultations, it should recognize children as a distinct group. Engaging with relevant child rights experts and stakeholders can help a business more accurately understand its impacts on children. Monitoring and tracking the effectiveness of a company's response is also vital to verifying whether measures are effectively addressing impacts on children, and whether policies and procedures are adequate. Monitoring should incorporate qualitative and quantitative indicators relevant to children's rights. If a company determines that it might have caused or contributed to adverse impacts on children, it should provide for or cooperate in remediation through legitimate processes, including operational-level grievance mechanisms. An 'adequate' mechanism should have legitimacy, accessibility, predictability, equitability, transparency and compatibility with children and their representatives.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to Policies and Commitments



Good Practice Examples

- **Pan American Silver** is a Canadian silver mining company with operations in Canada, Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico, and Peru. In its [Corporate Social Responsibility policy](#), it commits to respecting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- **Sherritt International** is a Canadian energy company with nickel and cobalt operations in Canada and Cuba, and oil and gas operations in Cuba. In its [Human Rights Policy](#), it commits to comply with the Children's Rights and Business Principles and the Child Rights and Security Checklist.
- **Lundin Gold** is a Canadian gold mining company with operations in Ecuador. In its human rights and social impact assessments, it identifies children as specific rights holders who require special attention and for whom there might be salient human rights impacts.
- **Suncor** is a Canadian energy company with oil and gas operations across Canada. In line with its Aboriginal Youth Engagement Strategy, it established an [Indigenous Youth Advisory Council \(IYAC\)](#), consisting of 10 young leaders between the ages of 18 and 30 from communities near Suncor's operations. The IYAC is an opportunity for Suncor and Indigenous youth to share, listen, reflect and act on issues of mutual interest that are impacting communities and the lives of Indigenous youth.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- **Principle 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and
- **Principle 2:** make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

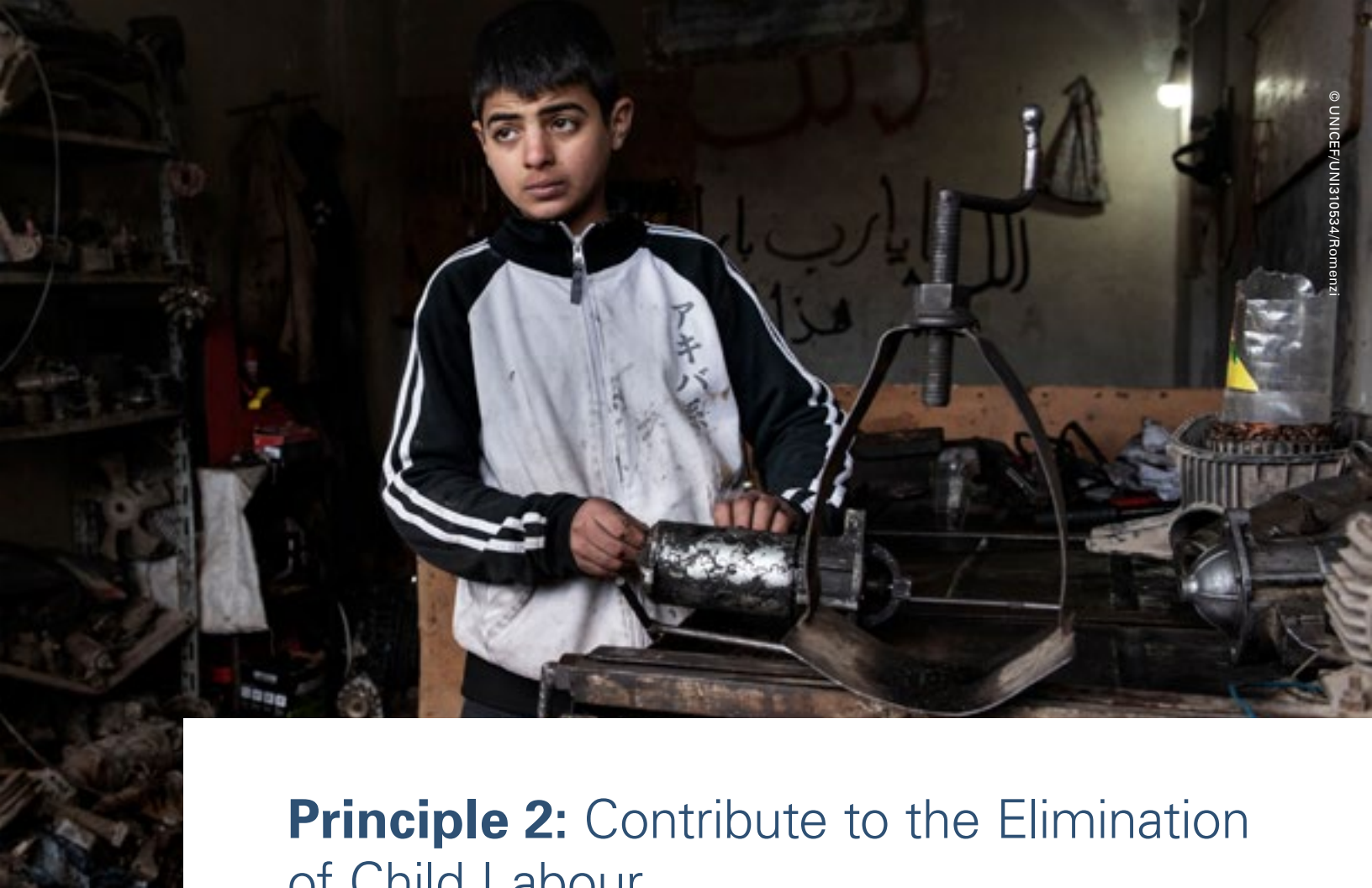


- **12.6** Adopt sustainable practices and integrate sustainability information into reporting cycles



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Knowing my human rights

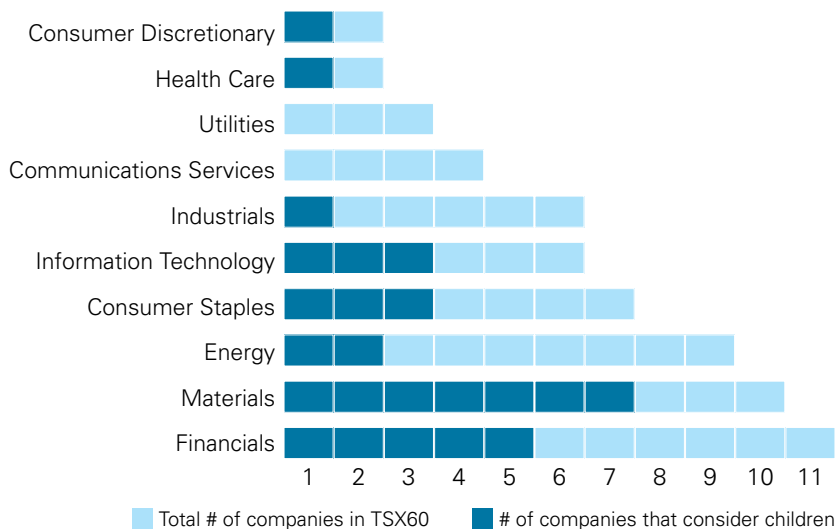


Principle 2: Contribute to the Elimination of Child Labour

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 152 million children, almost one in ten children worldwide, are engaged in child labour around the world. This is work that is mentally or physically dangerous and interferes with their education. Of these, 73 million are in hazardous work that directly harms their health and safety.

Both children's age and their work conditions should be regulated and consider their broader rights and best interests. The Canadian Index of Child and Youth Wellbeing estimates that 12.4 per cent of 15-17 year olds in Canada work 16 or more hours a week, which may be risky to their health and development when it occurs during the school year. All businesses should refer to [ILO Convention No. 138](#) on the minimum age for admission to employment and work, and comply with national law or international standards, whichever is higher. No child under 18 years old should ever be engaged in the worst forms of child labour, defined in [ILO Convention 182](#), or 'hazardous' work that is likely to harm children's health, safety or morals. Child labour is a complex issue with social, economic and cultural roots. Addressing the causes of child labour requires a multi-stakeholder approach at both the community and policy levels. The corporate contribution to eliminate child labour includes working with governments, social partners and others to promote education and sustainable solutions to address the root causes of child labour. Working in collaboration with other companies, suppliers, sectoral associations and employers' organizations can help develop an industry-wide approach to address child labour and create a common culture for positive change.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to the Elimination of Child Labour



Good Practice Examples

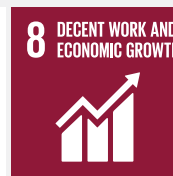
- The **Mining Association of Canada (MAC)** is the national organization of the Canadian mining industry and represents companies involved in mineral exploration, mining, smelting, refining and semi-fabrication, who account for most of Canada's output of metals, minerals and energy products. MAC's *Towards Sustainable Mining (TSM)* program, focused on enabling mining companies to meet society's needs for minerals, metals and energy products in the most socially, economically and environmentally responsible way, includes a *Prevention of Child and Forced Labour Protocol*. This requires participating companies to commit to respecting the rights of workers and not engaging in practices of forced or child labour. To ensure this commitment is being adhered to, independent verifiers assess whether participating mines have processes in place to ensure that there are no instances of child and forced labour in their business.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- Principle 5:** Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour.



- 8.7** Secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, and end child labour in all its forms



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Spending a lot of time at a job

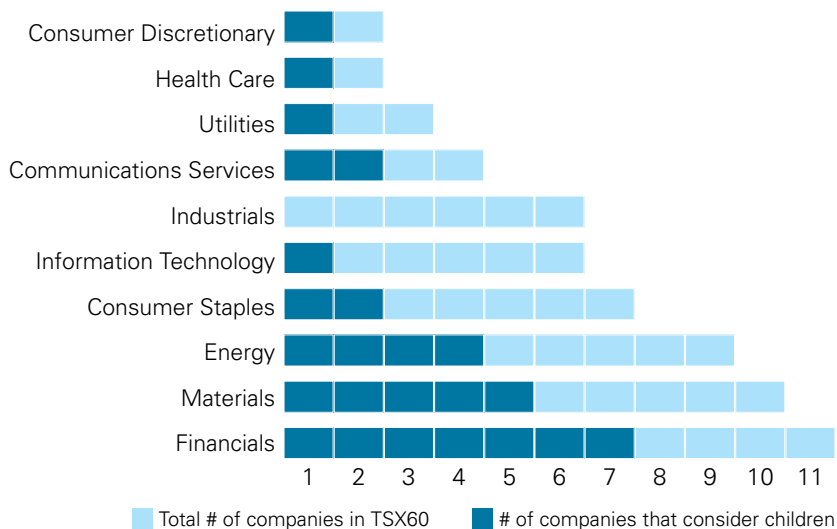


Principle 3: Provide Decent Work for Young Workers, Parents and Caregivers

The ILO estimates that there are 218 million children in employment, which includes both child labour and permitted forms of employment involving children of legal working age.

The Canadian Index of Child and Youth Wellbeing estimates that 28.2 per cent of adults with children under 18 in Canada have insecure employment, which can increase family stress, lower family income and decrease access to employer benefits and Employment Insurance. Children and young people in employment are particularly vulnerable to violence, exploitation and abuse. Yet due to their evolving level of maturity and experience, they often know little about their rights and are unable to speak up against abuse. Business policies and procedures should take into account young workers' needs for protection and provide a work environment that respects their rights without discrimination. The successful and smooth transition from school to work is important for young workers, communities, economies, and businesses. When developing policies to support families, all families should receive equal support towards being able to care for their children. Parental leave, breastfeeding policies and flexible workplace policies can enable parents and caregivers to support children during the crucial phase of early childhood. [ILO Convention 183](#) entitles a woman to a minimum 14 weeks maternity leave, and to daily breaks to breastfeed her child. Providing protection for mothers, including protection from workplace risks during pregnancy, to paid maternity leave and medical care, is a vital component in reducing absenteeism and increasing retention and productivity. An adequate living wage and fair employment terms and decent working conditions are also crucial.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to Decent Workplace Policies



Good Practice Examples

Several **Canadian banks** have implemented family-friendly workplace policies.

- BMO's **Back-up Child and Elder Care** programs offer employees a short-term solution when their child care or elder care plans fall through unexpectedly. The program provides up to 10 days of back-up child care, as well as up to six passes of elder care services per year.
- Scotiabank employees are provided with a paid membership to a Canada-wide **provider of daycare and back-up childcare** for children up to age 12, including 5 days of back-up child care per child, and discounts on full and part-time child care. Child and elder care expenses can also be reimbursed through the benefits plan's wellbeing account. All new parents in Canada (including biological, adoptive and same-sex parents) are eligible to receive a supplementary top-up to their employment insurance benefits for a six-week period, and employees on maternity leave receive an additional six week top-up (for a total of 12 weeks).

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- **Principle 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- **Principle 4:** the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour; and
- **Principle 6:** the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



- **8.5** Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people
- **8.6** Substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
- **8.8** Promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Getting injured at work
- Disengaged from learning and employment
- Living in poverty/severe poverty
- Having parents with insecure work

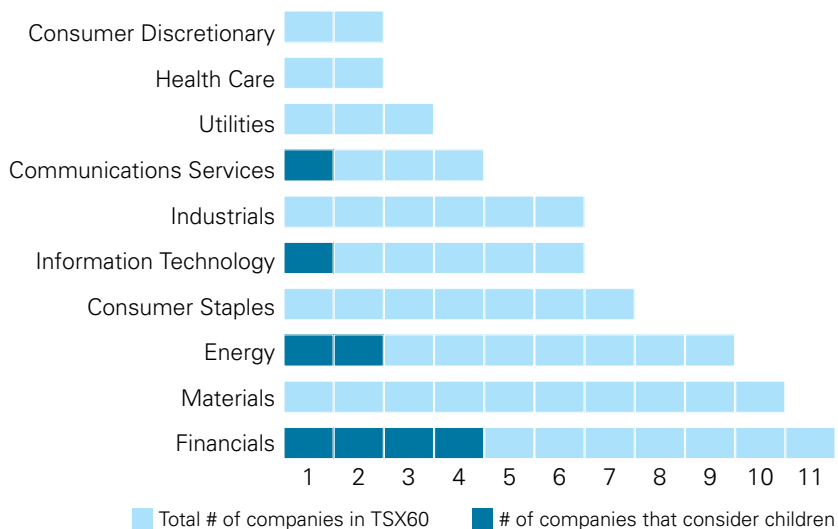


Principle 4: Ensure the Protection and Safety of Children

Every year UNICEF estimates that 1 billion children around the world experience some form of emotional, physical or sexual violence.

The Canadian Index for Child and Youth Wellbeing estimates that although only 11.3 per cent of 15-17 year olds in Canada have been victims of violent crime, the rate of child homicide (0.7 per 100,000 among 0-19 years old) is one of the highest among high-income countries. Business facilities or resources can be used to facilitate the abuse and exploitation of children in any number of ways, usually without the company's knowledge and contrary to its values, its corporate image and often its own stated internal regulations. Employees can use company property, such as computers or phones, to download sexual abuse images, or they might use company funds during business travel to engage in sexual exploitation. The conduct of employees on company business and on company premises or in company supported housing poses additional risks. Remote worksites that rely on a large, transient workforce often entail increased risks of child abuse, through, for instance, sexual exploitation or involvement in other illegal activities. Businesses should therefore screen employees during recruitment and implement child safeguarding policies and practices.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to Protection and Safety



Good Practice Examples

Canadian banks have been working on several initiatives to address human trafficking and sexual exploitation, including Scotiabank and BMO. The [Government of Ontario's Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy](#) estimates that approximately two-thirds of police-reported human trafficking cases in Canada occur in Ontario, where the average age of recruitment into sex trafficking is 13 years old, and over 70 per cent of victims identified by police are under the age of 25.

- To help ease survivors' re-entry into society, [Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking](#) (FAST) assembled a coalition of six survivor organizations and twelve global banks, and tasked them to independently develop the Survivor Inclusion Initiative, a framework to provide access to basic financial services, including financial literacy. This project was successfully piloted by Scotiabank in 2019.
- Another initiative is [Project Protect](#), where Canada's major banks joined forces to develop a comprehensive list of indicators to assist financial institutions with reporting requirements to the Government of Canada's financial intelligence unit. This identifies financial transactions and patterns of activities related to human trafficking in the sex trade that may give rise to suspicions of money laundering.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- Principle 4:** Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour; and
- Principle 5:** the effective abolition of child labour.

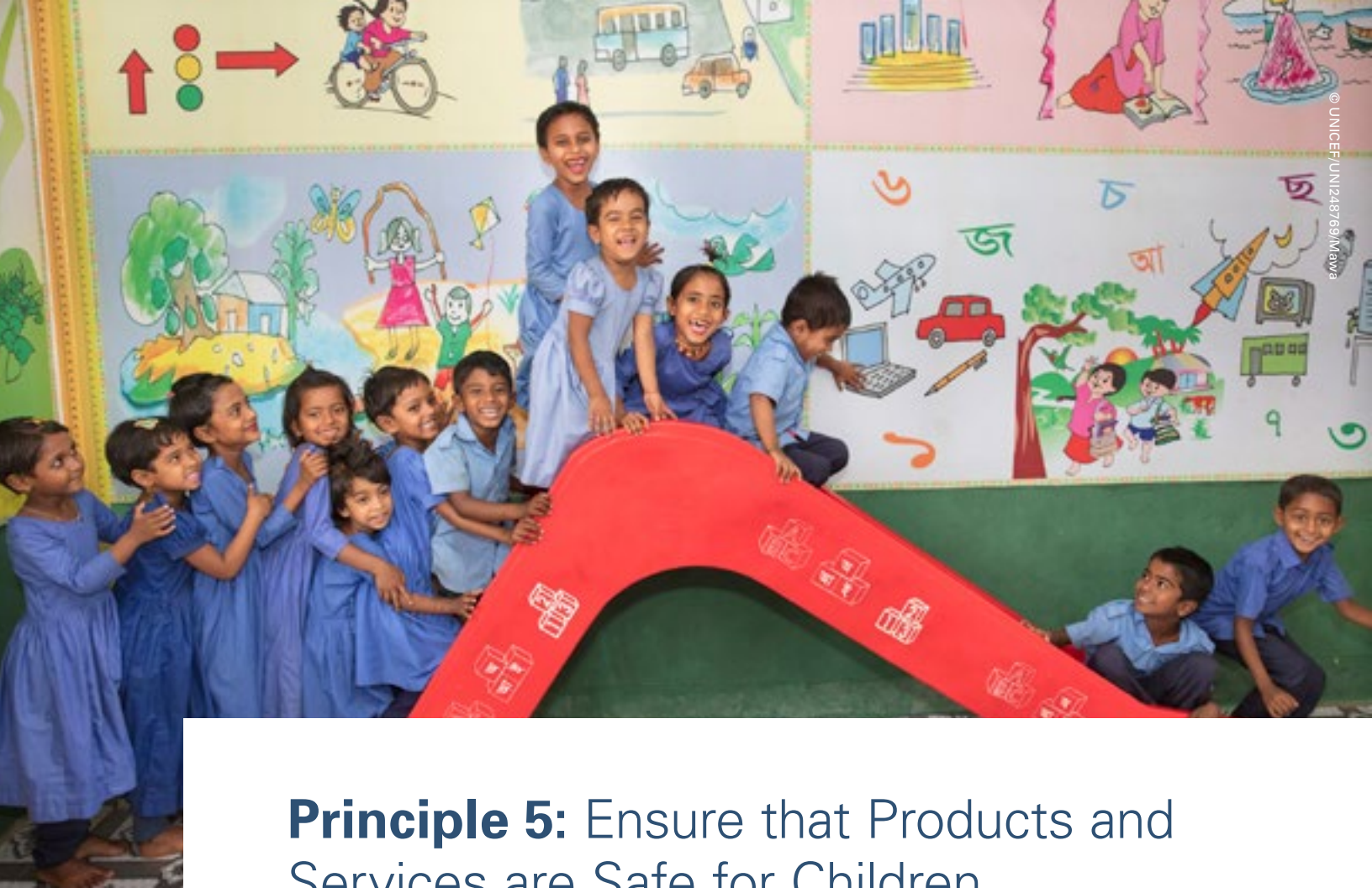


- 16.2** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- 5.2** Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls including sexual and other types of exploitation
- 8.7** Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Feeling safe in my neighbourhood
- Violent crime
- Homicide
- Discrimination

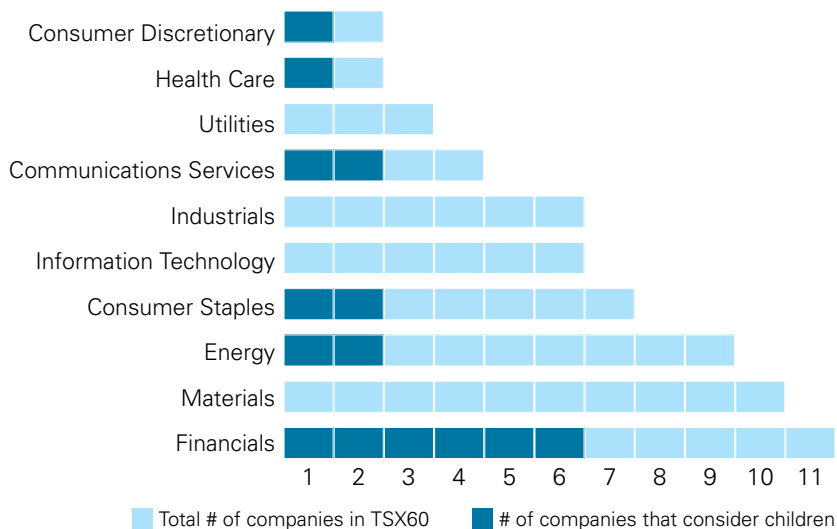


Principle 5: Ensure that Products and Services are Safe for Children

A company has the responsibility to ensure that all products and services for children, or to which children may be exposed, are safe and do not cause mental, moral or physical harm.

The company should ensure that the design of all products and services for children is in line with national laws and safety standards, and, in the absence of adequate national legal frameworks, refer to relevant international and/or industry standards. Products and services not designed for children's use, but nonetheless posing hazards to children, must also address safety concerns. For example, the Canadian Index of Child and Youth Wellbeing estimates that 7.2 per cent of 14-15 year olds in Canada regularly consume high amounts of alcohol, tobacco and cannabis. Businesses can adopt proven methods of risk reduction, such as requiring child-resistant packaging and warning labels for medications and substances that are toxic to children. Products and services might also be misused for purposes that exploit children. For example, internet access, travel services and hotels may be used to facilitate child exploitation and abuse. All of these may also involve the collection, use and sale of children's data. All companies must consider whether they are providing products, services or resources to employees and customers that make it easy or even encourage the exploitation and abuse of children.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to Products and Services



Good Practice Examples

- Several **Canadian banks** and financial institutions provide child-friendly financial products and services, and provide financial literacy and support to children and young people. These include Scotiabank's [Talk With Our Kids About Money](#) program, which provides parents and teachers with activities and resources to encourage conversations with children about money and finance. The Royal Bank of Canada provides free, bilingual [personal finance education](#) and an accompanying mobile phone application to young people across Canada.
- Several **Canadian telecommunications companies** have been working together to support MediaSmarts, including Bell and Telus. [MediaSmarts](#) develops educational materials and programs for children and young people on digital and media literacy, promoting a positive online experience for teens and pre-teens. These include online tutorials to assist parents with strategies for the digital generation, a web-awareness workshop series for teachers and librarians, and an annual media literacy week to build public awareness of the importance of digital consumers developing critical-thinking skills.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- **Principle 6:** Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



- **10.2** Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
- **16.7** Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

unicef CANADA

The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Feeling valued and respected
- Participating in decision-making
- Free to express ideas and opinions
- Taking risks

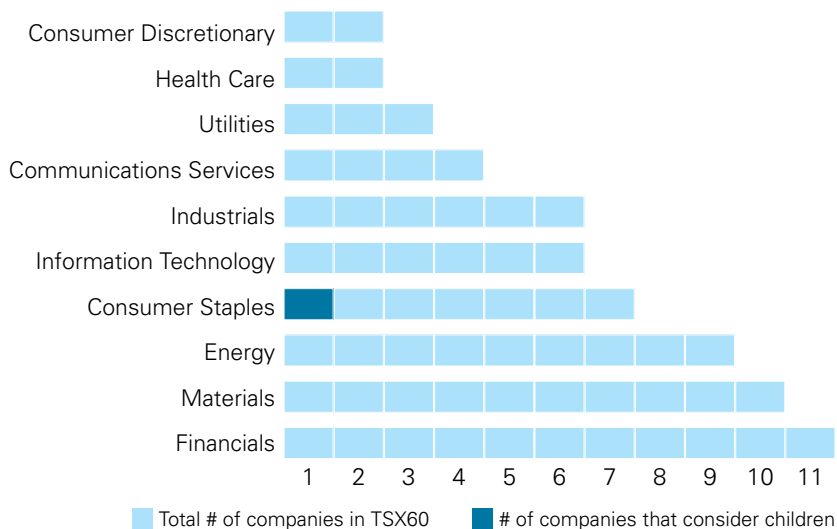


Principle 6: Use Marketing and Advertising that Respect and Support Child Rights

Marketing to children is a growing phenomenon, especially as children are increasingly making and influencing personal and family buying decisions. Companies should ensure that all of their communication tools, media outlets and marketing campaigns do not have an adverse impact on children.

Companies should not only refrain from marketing harmful products to children but should also ensure that advertisements that are inappropriate for children are not targeted or accessible to children. For instance, inappropriate advertising should not be placed in locations frequented by young children or broadcast during children's programming. In addition, marketing and advertising should not reinforce discrimination. In evaluating their communication strategies towards children, companies should also consider such factors as children's greater susceptibility to manipulation; the effects of unrealistic or sexualized body images and stereotypes; and advertising that promotes unhealthy, unsafe or violent behaviour. For example, the Canadian Index of Child and Youth Wellbeing estimates that only 55.7 per cent of 11-15 year olds in Canada think their body is about the right size, and 10.6 percent of 15-17 years olds are obese. As part of the commitment to support children's rights, companies can raise awareness of and promote children's rights, positive self-esteem, healthy lifestyles and non-violent values through existing communication and marketing channels.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to Marketing and Advertising



Good Practice Examples

- Mars Canada**, the Canadian division of Mars Incorporated, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of food, confectionery, and pet care products. As part of their [Marketing Code for Human Food](#), they commit to not market to children under 12 (this increases to under 13 for digital channels, where they also commit not to collect data from children and teenagers under 16), not use celebrities primarily appealing to children under 12, not use children as spokespeople or show them consuming chocolate or confectionery products, not advertise in or sponsor films or media programming aimed primarily at children under 12, and not place vending machines offering products in primary schools. Mars Canada supports the Government of Canada in its efforts to bring in federal legislation that limits direct marketing to children under 13, sharing its input and support in consultation responses to Health Canada and pre-Budget submissions to the Treasury Board.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- Principle 6:** Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



- 10.2** Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
- 16.7** Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Feeling valued and respected
- Liking how I look
- Obesity
- Breastfeeding

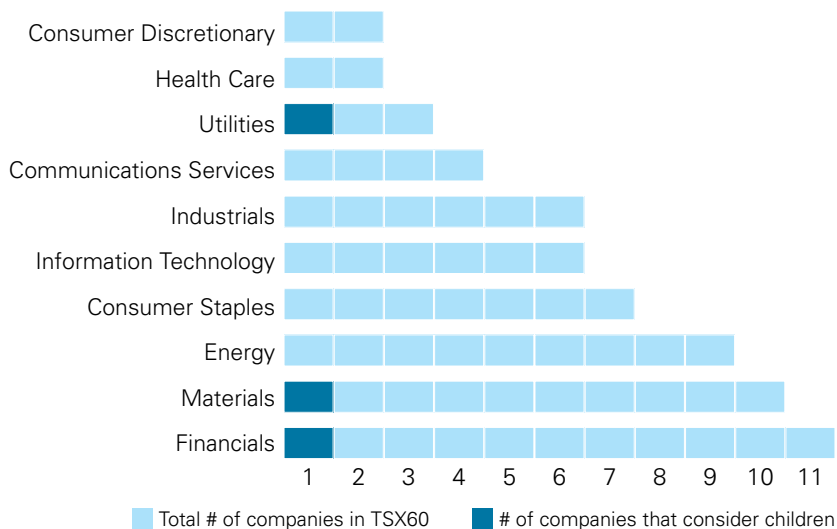


Principle 7: Respect Child Rights in Relation to the Environment and Land Use

Children are most severely affected by issues like climate change, water scarcity and urbanization. Due to their physiology and increased exposure, the impact of climate change and pollution (air, soil, water, and noise) on children can be more serious and long-lasting than in adults.

The Canadian Index of Child and Youth Wellbeing estimates that 11.1 per cent of homes with children under 18 in Canada have to boil their water to ensure it is safe to drink. Children are at greater risk from environmental hazards than adults because of their physical size, developing bodies, metabolic rates, natural curiosity and lack of knowledge about threats in their environment. Businesses should take the particular vulnerabilities and risks faced by children – to resource scarcity, waste, pollution and toxicity – into account in company environmental policies and due diligence processes. Businesses should ensure that the rights of children, their families and communities are addressed in contingency planning and remediation activities. Business use of land may also affect children's community resources if it displaces schools, health centres or places of play. Engaging in meaningful, informed consultation with women, youth and children can ensure that the risks of adverse impacts on children are identified and addressed early on. Land ownership and registries may discriminate against women and children, and girls in particular, whose inheritance rights are often not registered or recognized. If relocation cannot be avoided, businesses should ensure that the best interests of the child and children's rights to education, protection, health, adequate food and standard of living, and participation are taken into consideration when carrying out resettlement and providing for compensation.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to the Environment and Land Use



Good Practice Examples

- **Arc'teryx** is a Canadian design company specializing in technical high-performance apparel, outerwear and equipment. They used their expertise in insulation to contribute to a project to *tackle air pollution in Mongolia's cities*, where the health and wellbeing of young people is being compromised. By improving the thermal performance of the traditional, tent-like ger dwellings, which house more than half the population, air pollution is reduced and child and maternal health improved. This includes the first thermal performance model of the ger; a set of validated strategies to improve ger insulation; and a number of tested prototype solutions for the floor, walls, door and roof.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- **Principle 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
- **Principle 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and
- **Principle 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.



- **13.2** Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning
- **12.4** Significantly reduce the release of chemicals and all waste into air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment
- **3.9** Substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Being environmentally aware
- Having polluted air
- Having safe drinking water
- Living with a sustainable climate

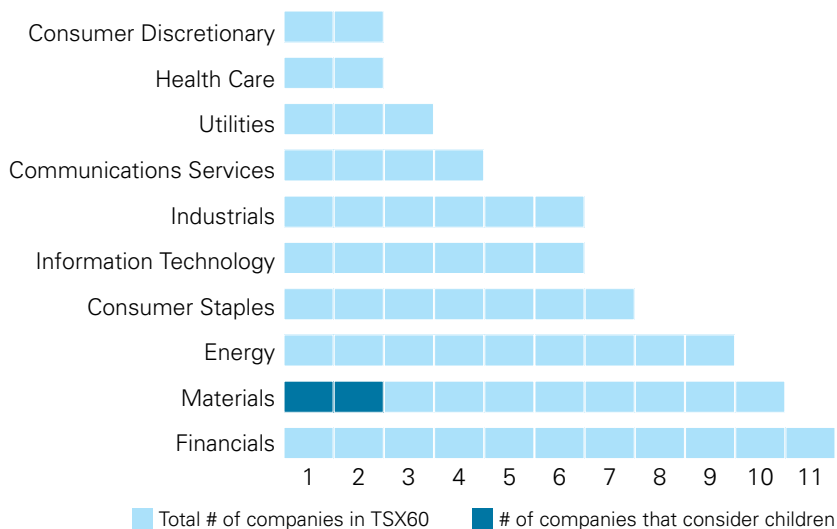


Principle 8: Respect and Support Child Rights in Security Arrangements

Security personnel encounter youth and children in a variety of ways, including as employees' family members, community members, and victims of violations, perpetrators or witnesses of alleged offences on company property. Because of their young age and physical development, children are at greater risk of experiencing abuse, intimidation and harassment.

Implications may be particularly acute for girls and young women who experience an elevated risk of gender-based violence. Therefore, it is crucial for a company to have security arrangements that take children's rights into account. For example, companies should ensure that no children are recruited or used in security arrangements, either directly or indirectly through security providers. Over twelve months, UNICEF records 13,200 children exiting armed forces or armed groups across 17 countries. Training and protocols on the treatment of children should also be implemented, along with accessible and responsive grievance mechanisms.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to Security Arrangements



Good Practice Examples

Several **Canadian mining companies** have implemented the Child Rights and Security [Checklist](#) and [Handbook](#) which equip companies to integrate children's rights into public and private security arrangements, in line with the [Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights](#) (VPs).

- **Agnico Eagle Mines** included the Checklist as part of their all-site security management audit and required training on child rights and immediate reporting of potential child rights violations.
- **Barrick Gold** helped co-develop the Checklist, incorporated it into their external security risk assessments and VPs Standard, and included child rights in training for security personnel.
- **IAMGOLD** commit to address child rights in their security standard and guidelines, and training for security personnel includes specific provisions for addressing and respecting child rights.
- **Kinross Gold** included the Checklist in its toolkit for implementation of the VPs and in its training.
- **Newmont** implemented the Checklist at high-risk sites and audited compliance, as well as trained guards on treatment of minors in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- **Pan American Silver** implemented the Checklist and assessed compliance at all sites, as well as training security personnel and disaggregating grievances by age in their grievance mechanism.
- **Sheritt International** helped co-develop the Checklist, incorporated it into local security arrangements, and had it externally verified through an independent audit.
- **Teranga Gold** is implementing child-specific protocols for the use of force, search and seizure, apprehension, detention and transfer to authorities, with a focus on risks to girls and young women.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- **Principle 4:** Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour; and
- **Principle 5:** the effective abolition of child labour.



- **16.2** End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- **5.2** Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls, including sexual and other types of exploitation
- **8.7** Secure the prohibition and elimination of the recruitment and use of child soldiers



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Feeling safe in my neighbourhood
- Violent crime
- Homicide

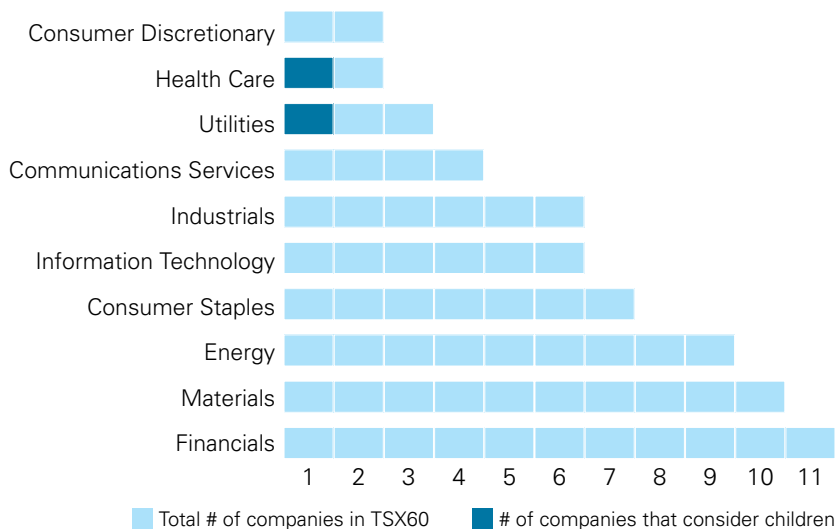


Principle 9: Help Protect Children affected by Emergencies

Children are disproportionately affected by emergencies, currently making up half of all refugees and 40 per cent of people internally displaced by conflict. UNICEF estimates that more than 500 million children now live in areas with extremely high flood occurrence, and almost 160 million in areas with high drought severity.

Emergency situations significantly affect children's rights by making children more susceptible to disease, malnutrition, exploitation and violence. Children with disabilities; displaced, migrant, separated and unaccompanied children; and indigenous or ethnic minority children are among those who will be the most vulnerable. The consequences of natural disasters are particularly severe for children, who might be separated from their families and exploited more readily because of their vulnerability. Companies that operate in emergency contexts must recognize these heightened risks of children's rights violations. Business should ensure that assistance for children is carried out in coordination with government and international humanitarian organisations, and that the rights of children, their families and communities are addressed in contingency planning and remediation activities.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to Emergencies



Good Practice Examples

- **Great Panther Mining** is a Canadian gold and silver mining company with operations in Brazil, Mexico and Peru. In Brazil, they hold *local emergency drills to educate residents about evacuation procedures* in the event of a tailings dam failure. Educational assemblies in public schools teach children age 7 to 15 about mine operation and safety. Students also received a 15-page comic book that detailed tailing mine emergency procedures in an informative, reassuring way.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- **Principle 8:** Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility



- **1.5** Reduce the exposure and vulnerability of the poor and vulnerable to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters
- **11.5** Reduce the number of people affected by disasters, with a focus on the poor and people in vulnerable situations
- **13.1** Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

- Being affected by a disaster
- Being environmentally aware
- Having polluted air
- Having safe drinking water

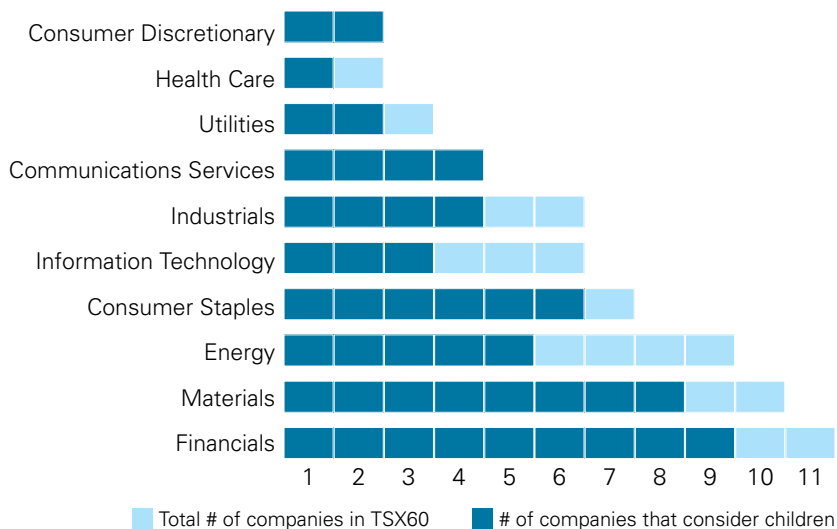


Principle 10: Reinforce Government and Community Efforts to Protect Child Rights

There is much that businesses can do as part of their responsibility to respect children's rights, including avoiding undermining government obligations to fulfil children's rights. Tax payments, anti-corruption measures and social investments all help build schools and hospitals, pay for teachers and provide life-saving health services.

Tax avoidance and evasion deprive governments of the resources they need to expand and sustain public services. Corruption can harm children in many ways – for example, it can increase the overall cost of providing public services such as education, water, sanitation and health; lower the quality of these services; and restrict coverage for the most marginalized communities. Businesses can also have considerable influence with governments and should use this power responsibly to support government efforts to promote children's rights and well-being. Support to community and government efforts should be based on assessments of children's actual needs. Businesses can support such efforts through provision of financial and non-financial resources, as well as publicly speaking out and advocating for children's rights with peers.

TSX60 Companies that Consider Children in Relation to Community Investments



Good Practice Examples

Many **Canadian companies** support community and government efforts on child rights and wellbeing through investments in local communities. The most effective are those that consult with children or children's representatives, focus on the most vulnerable, align with existing priorities (particularly the SDGs), partner with others, collect disaggregated data, build local capacity, and strengthen existing systems. The Canadian mining industry has several examples, including:

- **Teck Resources** supporting SDG 3.2 in India, reaching 2.5 million mothers to reduce diarrhea-related deaths of children under-five, particularly girls, in three high-burden states.
- **Pan American Silver** supporting SDGs 1.5 and 11.5 across South America, reaching nearly 1.5 million people with the health and education they need during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Sheritt International** supporting SDG 3.6 in Cuba, reaching 400,000 children through awareness sessions and simulated road environments to reduce deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.
- **B2Gold** supporting SDGs 4.1 and 5.2 in Mali, reaching 9,000 people and providing education and protection for vulnerable girls working in and around informal mining sites.

Relevant Frameworks



Global Compact
Network Canada

- **Principle 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.



- **17.3** Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources
- **17.17** Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships
- **16.5** Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms



The Canadian Index of
Child and Youth Well-being

All of the indicators in the Index are actionable and can be influenced by government, business and civil society policies, programs and practices. The intersecting dimensions of the Index demonstrate the importance of proactive cross-sectoral collaboration on potential impacts on child and youth well-being.

Recommendations

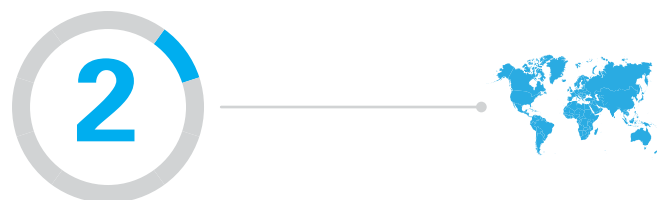
Canadian companies and investors should have a general understanding of the potential impacts of business on children. Not all of the principles outlined above will be equally relevant to all companies, but regardless of which ones are most material, Canadian businesses should implement the following recommendations:



Commit to respect and support child rights in policies and codes of conduct

TOOL:

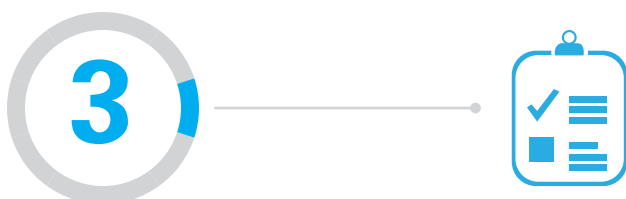
Children's Rights in Policies and Codes of Conduct; UNICEF and Save the Children
<https://www.unicef.ca/policies>



Identify risks to child rights and wellbeing in countries of operation

TOOL:

Children's Rights and Business Atlas; UNICEF and Global Child Forum
<https://www.childrensrighsatlas.org/>



Identify potential and actual business impacts on child rights and well-being

TOOLS:

Children's Rights in Impact Assessments; UNICEF and the Danish Institute for Human Rights
<https://www.unicef.ca/assessments>

Canadian Index of Child and Youth Well-being; UNICEF Canada
<https://oneyouth.unicef.ca/en/child-and-youth-well-being-index>



Engage meaningfully with children or their representatives when appropriate

TOOL:

Engaging Stakeholders on Children's Rights; UNICEF
<https://www.unicef.ca/engagement>



Account for efforts to mitigate impacts on children in annual public communications

TOOL:

Children's Rights in Sustainability Reporting; UNICEF and the Global Reporting Initiative
<https://www.unicef.ca/reporting>



Ensure that grievance mechanisms are accessible and responsive to children

TOOL:

Operational-level Grievance Mechanisms fit for Children; UNICEF
<https://www.unicef.ca/grievance>



Develop a child safeguarding program to protect children from harm

TOOL:

Child Safeguarding Toolkit for Business; UNICEF
<https://www.unicef.ca/safeguarding>



Integrate children's considerations into security arrangements

TOOL:

Child Rights and Security Checklist and Handbook; UNICEF Canada and the Government of Canada
<https://www.unicef.ca/securitychecklist>
<https://www.unicef.ca/securityhandbook>



Implement family-friendly policies in the workplace

TOOL:

Family-Friendly Workplaces; UNICEF and UN Global Compact
<https://www.unicef.ca/workplaces>



Support children affected by emergencies in risk reduction, response and recovery efforts

TOOL:

Children in Humanitarian Crises: What Business can do; UNICEF and UN Global Compact
<https://www.unicef.ca/crises>



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