



## HOW TO PARTICIPATE

National Child Day this year falls just as MPs will take up their new terms in office; it's the perfect time for children and young people to express their opinions and to say what action they want their MPs to take! Because the new Parliament will be forming and new MPs will be orienting themselves and their new staff to the work, we are making adjustments to Bring Your MP to School Day this year. Instead of the traditional question-and-answer format of an in-school visit, we want young people to fill in the sentence, "A Canada where all children truly belong is..." This is their opportunity to think about what issues matter the most to them, and we'll engage Canada's new Parliamentarians to listen.

UNICEF Canada has already started asking this question to people across the nation (see our gallery of responses at <http://on.fb.me/1hL1jjA>). Our Bring Your MP to School Day materials this year are tailored to involve your students in this initiative. Answers can be simple, such as, "A Canada where all children truly belong is one where they all have enough to eat", to more complex, such as, "A Canada where all children truly belong is a place where indigenous peoples are valued and the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are instituted at the federal level".

Our megaphone speech bubble image is included in our event kit at [www.unicef.ca/ncd](http://www.unicef.ca/ncd). Students can write their response to the sentence into the electronic PDF, which you can then save and e-mail back to us. Alternatively, you can print the image, ask students to write their responses by hand, and then e-mail photos of the megaphone to us. If you want to go the extra mile, you can record a video of your students reading their responses or holding up their completed megaphones. No matter which of these options you choose, all responses will be added to our online gallery. We will also forward them on to your MP's office, and ask the MP to respond.

### School Participation - Step-by-Step

1. Confirm your intention to participate by emailing [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca)
2. Dedicate one class lesson to teaching your students about the role of Members of Parliament, and about children's right to be heard, using the resources listed below and on our website's 'Helpful links' section. Discuss what issues matter to them, and what changes they would like to see in their country.
3. Have students write on the megaphone image (either electronically or hard copy) by finishing the sentence, "A Canada where all children truly belong is..."
4. E-mail [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) the completed PDF documents; alternatively e-mail photos of the completed images and/or a video (November 9 – 13).
5. UNICEF Canada will share the responses in our online gallery and will forward them to MPs asking for their response.
6. MPs respond with how they plan to implement the views and considerations of young people (November 16 – 20).



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Some MPs may be willing to arrange in-class visits at a later time to discuss these issues with your students. If such an interest is indicated, we will be sure to help facilitate such a visit.





## BEST PRACTICES FOR “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, email [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) to confirm your interest in participating in this activity.

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 Activity

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
- Make the logistical arrangements for the activity
  - secure the computer lab or hard copy megaphone images and a camera/recording device on which to capture the students' responses
  - secure parental permission, if making a video; if parental permission is denied, decide upon an alternate strategy (for example, choosing one designated student to pose all the questions; photographing only the megaphone image; etc)
  - provide the completed parental permission forms to UNICEF Canada
- 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 by posting the megaphone image around the school, and sharing the question 'A Canada where all children truly belong is...' through newsletters and parent councils
  - 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 Activity

- 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 comments and thoughts for the MP. Generate as many slogans as students can. **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 write, 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 that 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, which can be captured on video and shared with the MP
- The teacher can review the responses to ensure they are appropriate for the purpose of the activity and the MP's capacity to respond, and discuss any concerns with the students.

### **Complete the Activity (November 9 – 13)**

- Ensure the recording device is charged and ready
- Allocate enough time to record the questions and do re-takes if necessary (at least 30 minutes)
- Have a staff and student thank the MP for watching the video
- Send the recording to UNICEF Canada ([policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca)) who will share it with your MP's office, and forward you the MP's response!

### **After the Activity**

- View the MP's response with your students
- Discuss the MP's response with students in their classrooms. Students could also complete a writing exercise on their experiences, which could be published in school or local newspapers, or on the UNICEF Canada blog (contact [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) to discuss)
- Send a thank you letter to your MP

- Share key messages from the event in your school newsletters, on your website and through social media channels, tagging @UNICEFCanada and #timetobeheardStay tuned!

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Your feedback on this initiative will be very helpful for future planning efforts. UNICEF Canada will contact you the week after your visit for feedback:

- Three “highlights” and/or key points raised during the activity (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 quotes from students (please provide each student’s first name, age and grade, if available)
- Answers to a short evaluation survey to gather suggestions for next year

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

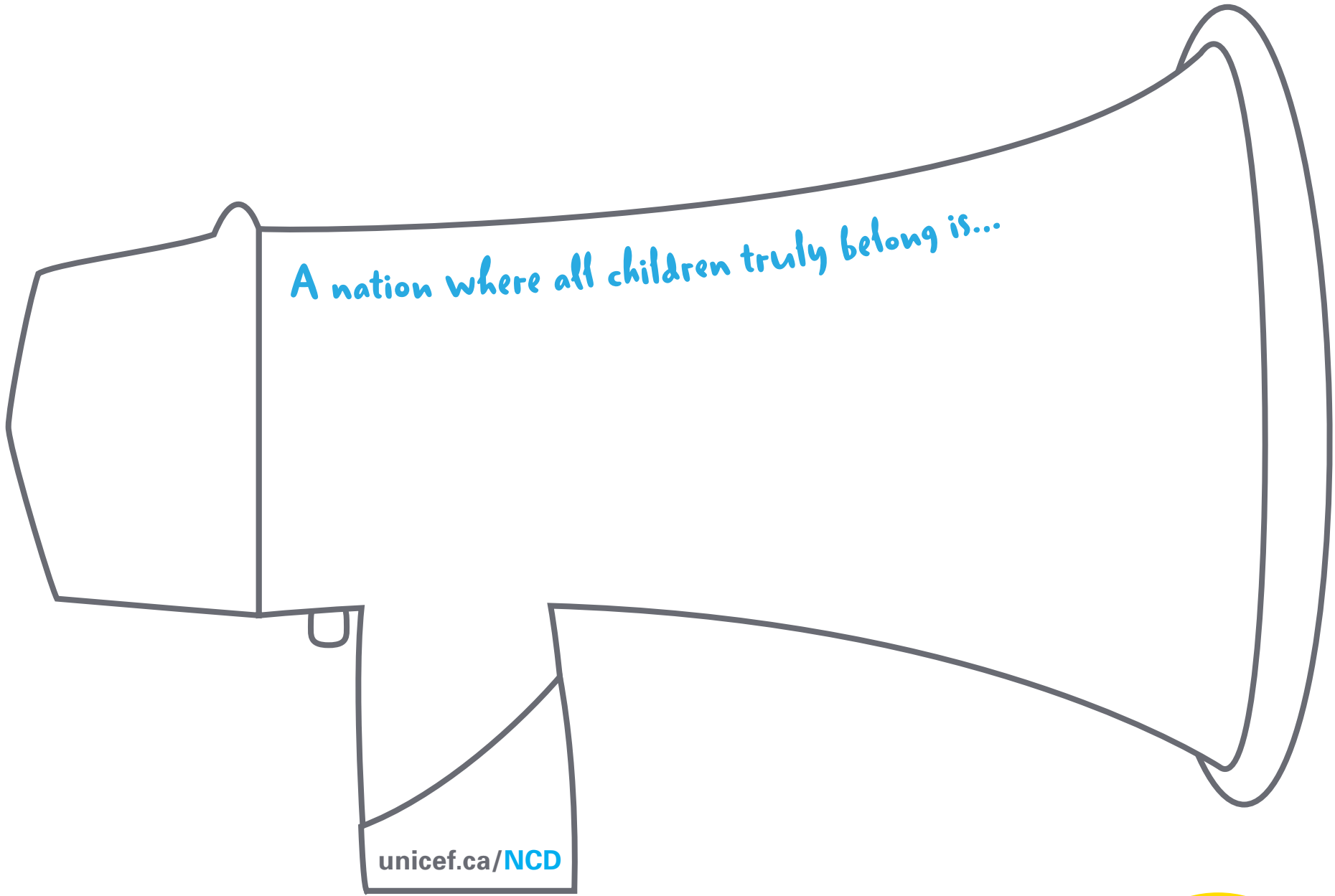
- Be sensitive to issues that might be raised by students during the preparations for the activity – students might ask questions that relate to very personal matters or might disclose a rights violation that has happened to them. Using the Event Kit megaphone image to engage students in writing out 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
  - Think about the issues that matter to you, in your community; in your country; in the world. Tell your MP what you want him/her to know to help represent your views in Parliament
- Remember – your opinion matters!

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





A nation where all children truly belong is...

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





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Dear <Name>,

We are writing to invite you to join us, <school name>, in a “Bring your MP to School Day” activity between 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of November. Our students and staff would welcome this opportunity to celebrate National Child Day 2015 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 2015 and ensure that children’s voices, concerns and interests find expression in and enjoy meaningful attention from Parliamentarians.

As the youngest Canadian citizens, our students want our MPs to know that they are interested in a dialogue with their representatives in Parliament. “Bring an 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 our population – helps inform decisions that affect this often vulnerable but non-voting population, and advances the civic education of Canada’s youngest citizens.

Our school would like to share with you our students’ thoughts in regards to the question, “What does a Canada where all children truly belong look like?” Our students complete the image at <http://bit.ly/1PDuYqI> during the week of Nov 9 - 13 and will then share their responses with you via email. We would appreciate your taking the time to review their thoughts and provide a response between November 16 – 20 to let them know how you will take action on their ideas during your time as elected representative.

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>





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## SCHOOL MEDIA KIT CONTENTS

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





## TIPS FOR MEDIA ENGAGEMENT: SCHOOLS

If participating schools and MPs wish to publicize their participation in UNICEF Canada's "Bring your MP to School Day," please refer to the tips below.

### Before the media release:

- Contact the MP's office to ensure that everyone is willing to be publicly recognized for their participation
- 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. UNICEF Canada's release forms can be acquired by emailing [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca). Follow school board policies for media engagement
- Identify what social media networks you want to utilize to publicize the activity
- 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.

### After the media release:

- Thank the journalist for highlighting Bring Your MP to School Day
- 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 activity with UNICEF Canada by emailing them to [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca). UNICEF Canada can share these with our networks through our website, social media and other communications, and in our press release on National Child Day, November 20 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>, 2015 – To celebrate National Child Day, <MP name> heard from 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 exchange and learn from each other. <school name> was one of approximately \_\_\_ schools across Canada to engage with a Member of Parliament.

“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 identified what a Canada where all children truly belong looks like. They identified that <conversation topics> are important to a society where all children belong. In particular, <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 exchange 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>



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## 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.
- Include the NCD 2015 banner or logo on all staff email signatures during National Child Day and encourage school board staff to do the same.
- 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 sharing their ideas with their MP. It's their #timetobeheard! <http://unicef.ca/ncd>
- November 20 is National Child Day. See how our students celebrated 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 responding to our students as part of UNICEF Canada's Bring your MP to School Day. It's their time to be heard.
- Part of our celebrations for National Child Day involves children telling MPs what a Canada where all children truly belong looks like. 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)



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## 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 approximately \_\_\_ schools across the country. Students were given the opportunity to share the issues that matter to them and engage in hands-on civic engagement. MPs responded and discovered how the students’ views could inform their work.

Embracing the theme of “It’s our time to be heard,” the students discussed what a Canada where all children truly belong looks like. For many students, this activity was their first engagement 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).



## LOGOS

Use any of these logos in your communications for "Bring Your MP to School Day". Contact [policy@unicef.ca](mailto:policy@unicef.ca) to obtain graphic files if desired.



## 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)