

No Child Too Far

Canada's Children: Fulfilling their rights and well-being through Policy Advocacy

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advance the universal, human rights of children as enduring principles and standards - to ensure a "first call for children" in their societies and equitable opportunities to reach their fullest potential. We believe that no child is too far.

UNICEF Canada delivers UNICEF's mission for children in Canada through policy dialogue and advocacy. Policy advocacy is an essential aspect of UNICEF's work because it generates lasting, systemic change for children. The global scale of UNICEF's work provides a unique context for learning from experience; producing evidence and data as a public good; shifting public attitudes about children; and increasing the priority afforded children in policy, resource allocation and other actions that influence child well-being.

The well-being of children is the most important measure of the well-being of a society.

Adapted from UNICEF Report Card 11

What we do

POLICY ADVOCACY FOR CHILDREN

We bring the issues and concerns of children in Canada to the attention of governments at all levels and others who influence and develop policy, law and practice. Through research, policy briefs, presentations, parliamentary processes, special events and other efforts we influence perspectives, policies, laws and decisions affecting children on a wide range of issues to align with children's human rights and well-being.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

We offer training and education workshops and presentations to support governments, organizations and other professionals to use the Convention on the Rights of the Child to strengthen their work for and with children. Children's universal, human rights are the standards in international law for the treatment of children, to support their optimal survival, development and protection. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified by Canada in 1991. Realizing the promise of the Convention is an ongoing, progressive commitment. The

Convention is a useful framework to advance the well-being of children because it provides a comprehensive view of the interdependent conditions to scaffold child well-being, it makes clear what children are entitled to, it distinguishes the roles and responsibilities of different actors and articulates the principles that should guide all actions for children. Using the Convention to develop policies, laws, programs, services, administrative procedures and other decisions and actions leads to better outcomes for children.

UNICEF Canada has useful resources at www.unicef.ca/en/policy-advocacy-for-children.

Contact policy@unicef.ca for current training opportunities.

RESEARCH AND DATA FOR CHILDREN

The UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre in our global Office of Research is the main research arm of UNICEF. We work with young people and a wide range of organizations and champions to change the dialogue about children and childhood. We generate original research, pioneer data and develop tools to advance understanding of children's lives, stimulate debate, identify needs and point to effective solutions.

Find UNICEF research and data for children at www.unicef.ca/en/policy-advocacy-for-children/research-and-policy-analysis.

UNICEF Report Cards

UNICEF's Report Card series provides unique insights into the well-being of children in industrialized countries. International comparison demonstrates what it is possible to achieve when societies mobilize their resources, capacities and dreams to nurture great childhoods.

See the series at www.unicef-irc.org/publications/series/16 and our most recent Report Card at www.unicef.ca/irc12.

CHILD-SENSITIVE GOVERNANCE

We work with governments at all levels to elevate the priority afforded children in decision-making and action that shapes the conditions in which children grow up. While the actions of governments may seem remote from the daily lives of children, almost every area of government policy affects children to some degree, directly or indirectly. Children are particularly vulnerable because of their dependence on adults, their lesser social and legal status and the risk to their lifelong prospects if deprived of the conditions necessary for good childhood development. Governments who ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child have committed to give consideration to children as their first duty. Governance for children involves creating the processes and mechanisms to support that duty. They include tracking resource allocation for children in budgets, formulating laws that protect and support children's human rights and creating independent advocates or representatives for children.

In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of children shall be a primary consideration.

- Article 3, Convention on the Rights of the Child

Child Rights Impact Assessment

Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) can be an effective process to consider in advance the potential impacts of a decision on children, so adjustments or mitigating measures can be taken. UNICEF Canada works with governments and other organizations to integrate CRIA in their work. Learn more, participate in discussion and exchange with others, contribute resources and develop your practice in the CRIA Community of Practice at www.criacommunity.org.

Children's Commissioners and Advocates

Every government or agency with responsibility for children's rights should establish independent advocates, representatives, ombudspersons or commissioners for children to ensure their interests and views are known and issues resolved in timely and appropriate ways. UNICEF Canada works with these offices in Canada and worldwide to promote and support good practices.

Building the Legal Framework for Children

UNICEF Canada's legislative briefs, parliamentary submissions and policy dialogue aim to ensure children's interests are elevated and the legislative framework supports their rights. See <http://www.unicef.ca/en/article/submissions-and-briefs>.

INNOVATION FOR CHILDREN

We spark innovative approaches to advance the well-being of children by collaborating with a broad and diverse range of Canadians and taking a comprehensive view of children's lives. UNICEF's global Innovation Unit supports the application of design thinking through Innovation Labs that bring together the private sector, academia, governments and other experts together with young people to develop creative and sustainable solutions to pressing challenges.

Learn more at www.innovateforchildren.org or take a design challenge for children at www.unicefinnovation.org.

UNICEF Canada is exploring the potential to bring UNICEF's global expertise in data generation and social innovation to a "children's observatory" in Canada. An observatory for and with Canada's children would foster innovative approaches to child well-being and belonging. Contact policy@unicef.ca to learn more.

CHILD AND YOUTH INITIATIVES IN CANADA

We work with young people and a wide range of organizations and champions to create and steward initiatives that get Canadians engaged in promoting children's rights and well-being:

Celebrate National Child Day

unicef.ca/ncd

National Child Day is celebrated in Canada on November 20 in recognition of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is the time for young Canadians to express themselves and shape their own future. Our *Bring Your MP to School Day* is one way to celebrate their time to be heard.

Global Classroom

unicef.ca/globalclassroom

Global Classroom is UNICEF Canada's portal to support teaching and learning for global citizenship and rights respecting education.

Rights Respecting Schools

rightsrespectingschools.ca

UNICEF Canada's Rights Respecting Schools initiative works with Canada's education sector to support healthy, respectful relationships in schools.

Child Friendly Cities

unicef.ca/en/article/child-friendly-cities

Local governments are closest to children – to their families and communities. Child Friendly Cities in Canada and worldwide ensure that local communities develop to help children thrive.

Baby Friendly Initiatives

www.unicef.ca/en/article/the-baby-friendly-hospital-initiative

UNICEF facilitates the international Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative to support breastfeeding, implemented in Canada by governments, birthing facilities and the Breastfeeding Committee for Canada, so that every infant has the best start in life.



UNICEF's promise is to transform the world by securing the rights of children. Through advocacy we are working to generate informed dialogue about children and childhood, elevate the priority afforded children broadly in Canada's institutions, and innovate solutions to advance their well-being so that every child can grow up in the conditions promised in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.