

Moving Forward Together

Building a Canada Fit for Children

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From Challenges to Opportunities
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CANADIAN
CHILD CARE
FEDERATION

FÉDÉRATION
CANADIENNE DES
SERVICES DE GARDE
À L'ENFANCE

The Promises

- National Children's Agenda (**NCA**)
- Social Union Framework Agreement (**SUFA**)
- Early Childhood Development Agreement (**ECDA**)
- Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning and Care (**MFA**)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (**UNCRC**)
- A World Fit for Children
- A Canada Fit for Children

Each promise is an opportunity.

National Children's Agenda, 1997

- Formed by an intergovernmental and cross-sectoral council
- Envisioned as a long-term plan
- Outlined a shared vision for what Canadian society wants for its children based on community consultations

NCA Vision

- That children be loved and thrive
- That they be valued, and have the opportunity to develop their unique capacities
- That they be respected and protected, and in turn respect and protect others
- That they belong and contribute to caring and sharing communities

NCA's Goals

- To have children who are healthy emotionally and physically
- To have children who are secure
- To have children who are successful at learning
- To have children who are engaged and responsible

NCA's Direction

The NCA identifies six potential areas for collaboration:

- Supporting parents and strengthening families
- Enhancing early childhood development
- Improving economic security for families
- Providing early and continuous learning experiences
- Promoting healthy adolescent development
- Creating safe, supportive and violence-free communities

NCA Results

- National Child Benefit
- Extended parental leave
- Expanded Aboriginal Head Start
- Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being

Leadership by the National Children's Alliance

Social Union Framework Agreement, 1999

- **Purpose:** developed by federal and provincial/territorial governments to improve the network of social policies and programs developed by various levels of government
- **Principles:** reflect Canadian values of equity, fairness, respect and individual and collective responsibility

SUFA Promises

- Guarantees access to reasonably comparable services for all Canadians
- Respects the five principles of medicare
- Ensures adequate, stable and sustainable funding for social programs
- Respects Aboriginal treaty and other rights
- Ensures citizen participation in shaping policy

- Also promises government accountability, more cooperative approach among governments

Early Childhood Development Agreement, 2000

\$2.2 billion over 5 years to provinces and territories to spend on four key areas supporting early childhood development

- Promoting healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy
- Improving parenting and family supports
- Strengthening early childhood development, learning and care
- Strengthening community supports

Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning and Child Care, 2003

- First agreement to focus specifically on ELCC
- Builds on ECDA with extra funds for ELCC
- \$900-million over three years
- Increased to \$1.2-billion over five years in last federal budget

MFA and Effective Approaches

- Based on principles of
 - Availability
 - Accessibility
 - Affordability
 - Quality
 - Inclusiveness
 - Parental Choice

Similar principles described in the promised national system of early learning and child care

Foundations Program 2004

QUAD principles:

- Quality
- Universality
- Accessibility
- Developmental

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

... current “system” is a fragmented patchwork of services that are seriously under-funded and failing to meet the needs of children and families.

*Early Childhood Education and Care review,
Canada Country Note - October 2004*

OECD Recommendations

- Strengthen the present Federal/Provincial/Territorial agreements
- Encourage provincial governments to develop, with the major stakeholder groups, an early childhood strategy with targets, timelines and budgets
- Build bridges between child care and kindergarten education, with the aim of integrating ECEC both at ground level and at policy and management levels.

Intergovernmental Meeting

November 2004

Agreement on principles:

- Quality
- Universally Inclusive
- Accessible
- Developmental

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989

- Ratified by all world countries except the USA
- Outlines responsibilities of governments
- Principles include
 - Non-discrimination and equality of opportunity
 - Best interests of the child
 - Life, survival and development
 - Participation

UNCRC (cont.)

Article 2

Principle of non-discrimination

Article 3

Best interests of the child in all actions concerning children

Article 18

The right to child care services

Article 23

Rights of children with disabilities

Article 24

The right to health and health services

Article 31

Right to rest, leisure, play and recreation as well as culture and the arts

A World Fit for Children, 2002

“We want a world fit for children, because a world fit for us is a world fit for everyone.”

- Adopted at the UN Special Assembly on Children
- Powerful support of early childhood education and care
- Signatories commit to national plan of action



*Gabriela Azurduy Arrieta, 13,
from Bolivia
May 2002*

A Canada Fit for Children, 2004

- Canada's National Plan of Action in response to the World Fit for Children
- Led by Senator Landon Pearson, prepared from consultations with Canadians from all sectors of society – including children
- “a roadmap to guide Canada's collective efforts for and with children.”

CFC Goals, Strategies and Actions

- Supporting Families and Strengthening Communities
- Promoting Healthy Lives
- Protecting from Harm
- Promoting Education and Learning

CFC Stakeholders

No government or individual can do it alone!

- Children, including adolescents
- Parents and families
- Governments at all levels
- Civil society (the voluntary sector)
- The private sector
- Religious, spiritual and cultural leaders, and Aboriginal leaders
- Academics and researchers
- Teachers, early childhood educators, child and youth care workers – everyone who works directly with children
- Health care providers
- Media
- Artists, writers and musicians

Meeting the challenge... making the most of the opportunity

“Each of us can make a difference in the life of a child. So let us all commit to working together to build a Canada and a world fit for children.”

- *A Canada Fit for Children, 2004*

Working Together for Canada's Children

“ I would urge everyone who reads A Canada Fit for Children to become engaged in its primary goal: to work together on all levels – at the national level, at the individual and community level – to construct a world in which our children can live, learn, develop as far as their potential and dreams will take them.”

*-- The Right Honourable Paul Martin
Prime Minister of Canada*

How can YOU Help to Build a Canada Fit for Children?

“... by seeking out innovative projects to do with communities that will benefit children's healthy development now and for years to come.”

“...by helping spread information about healthy children's development, best and promising practice through the communications work I do.”

“... by modeling family-friendly practices in my work as a manager.”

“... by raising my children to become responsible citizens.”

To me a world fit for children is...



... a world filled with opportunities, one that could grow on for generations. – Ann, Fort Smith, Northwest Territories



... filled with clean air, clear water and strong ground to grow on.

Yvonne, Ottawa, Ontario



... one where children grow up feeling loved and supported by their families and the community at large.

Paula, Nepean, Ontario



... un monde sans peur
Judith, Ile-Bizard, Québec



... where children are healthy, kept safe and enjoy learning throughout childhood.
- *Tammy, Niagara Falls, Ontario*



... safe, secure, forgiving, loving, provides opportunities to all and treats everyone with respect.

Beth, North Gower, Ontario



... a world made up of communities, neighbourhoods and networks of families who look out for, support each other and share in joys and hardships.

Michelle, Oakville, Ontario



... a world in which every child's voice is
heard and valued.

Candice, Aylmer, Québec



... one in which they can get the vaccines they need, at no cost, no matter where they live.

Laurie, Ottawa, Ontario



... a world where every child gets the best possible start in life

Shane, Moncton, New Brunswick

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of a diverse group of children and adults standing in a circle, holding hands. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a clear, bright blue sky. The image is framed by a white border on the left and right sides.

**“We want a world fit for children,
because a world fit for us
is a world fit for everyone.”**