



Celebrate National Child Day 2017!

National Child Day is celebrated annually in Canada on November 20th in recognition of our country's commitment to upholding the rights of children. In 1959 Canada signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and in 1999, it was endorsed by Alberta. The UNCRC sets out the rights of children with 54 articles that provide us with a solid road map of what is needed to raise healthy and happy children and youth. **The 2017 theme is a child's right to be safe.**

Supporting children's rights is a key factor in improving their quality of life. It reaffirms our hard work and commitment to helping children reach their potential and advocating for change, throughout the year. Despite our abundant resources, many children and youth in Alberta face poverty, bullying, discrimination, poor mental health outcomes and abuse. A community that promotes and invests in healthy childhood development, free from these adversities, raises healthier and more engaged citizens.

When children experience safe, stable, and nurturing relationships, they develop the strength necessary to cope with significant stressors or challenges. When they are placed in unsafe environments that do not uphold these rights, children are at risk for toxic stress, hindered brain development, and negative physical and mental health outcomes later in life.

At the core of respecting a child's right to safety is their voice being heard, believed, and valued in their community. Whether children and youth are at school, at home, on a sports team, with friends, or online, fostering a safe community involves creating positive relationships with caring peers and adults. We respect a child's right to safety by:

- being approachable;
- listening to, and believing their concerns; and
- advocating for safe spaces for them to learn, grow and play.

We encourage all community members to learn about children's rights and to make plans to celebrate the day. Wear blue, invite a speaker to your space to speak about safety, plan an event that highlights a social justice issue impacting the children you work with, read a story or watch a film on children's rights, or write an article for your local community newsletter. Please visit www.nationalchildday.ca for more ideas and to learn more about National Child Day. Stay tuned for toolkits, event listings and other resources to support safety and healthy child development in our communities.



@Natlchildday #NCD2017 #RightToBeSafe