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National Alliance for  
Children and Youth

L'alliance nationale pour  
l'enfance et la jeunesse

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## February Spotlight

This month a prevalent discussion has focused on Canada's poverty rate and how its staggering incline impedes on human rights. A recent Huffington Post [article](#) observes efforts to implement anti-poverty strategies, recognizing that this process is long, difficult and multi-faceted. British Columbia and Prince Edward Island are provinces most cited as failing on ending poverty. These provinces have had very little in the way of poverty reduction strategy. In contrast, there are a few examples of provinces and territories who have met with success: Newfoundland, Labrador, and Quebec. While this success has been attributed to many factors, it is likely the result of these provinces making poverty a high priority for all decisions made within the government. The article concludes: "for a poverty reduction strategy to be successful, it takes time, political momentum, dedicated resources and an understanding that governments must consider the lived realities of poverty in every single policy decision they make." In other words, a recommitment is needed from those that have a voice in this conversation, particularly those sensitive to the issues Canadian children and families face.

Minister Duclos has written that he will be "drawing on the expertise" of provinces and territories for the Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy. In line with this, at the beginning of February, Minister Duclos launched a [call for nominations](#) for an Advisory Committee on Homelessness. The goal is to create a panel that supports the renewal of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, an initiative that has benefitted Canadians since its launch 1999. Efforts such as this are necessary because, since the dissolution of the National Council of Welfare in 2012, Canada has lost its primary mechanism for measuring poverty and social assistance in each province and territory, creating a major gap in vital information. At the present time, more than any time in the past, our sector has an opportunity to come together to fill this gap.

NACY would like to direct its members towards the Canadian Poverty Institute and the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, who have joined to launch the Canadian Poverty Hub, an online repository of relevant research with respect to the causes and impacts of poverty, as well as policies and best practices in poverty prevention and reduction into a searchable database for researchers, practitioners and government policy officials to access current research on a range of poverty related issues. For information on how to submit resources for inclusion in the Poverty Hub, visit their [website](#).

# Policy Developments



On February 14th, 2017 Imagine Canada and the Ontario Nonprofit Network addressed an open letter to the Honourable Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development. They have urged for a delay of Canada's Anti-Spam Law Private Right of Action (PRA). Nonprofit and charitable organizations worry that proclamation of PRA will expose them to frivolous and vexatious lawsuits and threats of lawsuits. A full list of the concerns can be found in the [address](#).

Ontario is increasing wages to help keep child care professionals in licensed child care settings and encourage growth in the sector, ensuring that children and families across the province continue to benefit from safe, high-quality child care that promotes early learning and development. As part of Ontario's commitment to supporting child care professionals, the program will receive annual funding. This year, the province will provide ongoing wage enhancement for eligible child care workers and home visitors in the licensed child care sector, an ongoing enhancement for eligible home child care providers, and a raise in the maximum hourly wage for home child care providers. The Ministry of Education expands on this in its [release](#).

## News in the Sector

In an open letter published February 14th, 2017, the Parent Advocacy Network for Public Education and other signatories called for a 20% increase in funding to address the current deficiencies in the education system. The open letter contained thirteen specific demands; among them, the mandate that BC children should be able to attend safe, educationally appropriate schools that are fully-funded and offer high-quality curriculums with full access to staff and resources. You can read the open letter [here](#).



On February 14th, hundreds gathered on Parliament Hill to urge the federal government into ensuring equity in services for indigenous children. *Have a Heart Day* is a child and youth-led reconciliation event that brings together caring Canadians to help ensure First Nations children have the services they need to grow up safely at home, receive a good education, and be healthy. That same day, a Superior Court of Ontario judge ruled in favour of the survivors of the "Sixties Scoop," an Ontario-led program where thousands of on-reserve children were placed with non-native families. The *Have a Heart* event seems more important than ever after the outcome of the ruling suggested the federal government failed to take reasonable steps to prevent those children from losing their indigenous heritage.

Toronto has been found to have the most expensive childcare program in the nation, as it costs approximately \$24,000 per year per child with no relief in sight. Considering that women are the primary caregivers in their families, under-investment in childcare, systematically disadvantages, this includes most of the population. As it stands, in the preliminary 2017 budget, the proposed service cuts are directly aimed at the homeless, seniors, poor, youth, women and children. Read the full article [here](#).

## Funding Announcements

The Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) is looking to partner with members of the Canadian Internet community to help build a better online Canada. CIRA's Community Investment Program is now accepting funding applications for 2017. CIRA's Community Investment Program targets its support to four program areas, including providing children and youth the Internet-based tools they need to succeed. [Applications](#) for this round of funding will be accepted until March 1, 2017.

The Law Foundation of Ontario's Responsive Grants program enables funding for ideas generated by nonprofit community groups to improve access to justice. Each year the program includes one round of major grants (up to \$100,000) and two rounds of small grants (up to \$15,000). Responsive Grants aim to encourage new ideas, innovations, approaches, and relationships that can help address emerging needs and connect more people to legal information and supports.

This is an opportunity to put Canadian youth at the forefront. For more information, see the guidelines [here](#).

Federated Health Charities is running a campaign within the Ontario Public Service and raising funds for provincially based health charities. They currently have 16 charities that receive funds from the annual campaign and are looking to bring on a 17th. The [application](#) process is now open and ends March 31st, 2017.

## Events and Opportunities



Side-by-Side: Strategies for Working with Vulnerable Fathers will bring together practitioners, service providers, researchers, and dads to discuss the things that increase vulnerability in fatherhood and lead men to be somewhat marginalized as parents, with a focus on Indigenous fathers, incarcerated fathers, domestic violence issues, young dads, and more. The conference will be hosted by Dad Central Canada in Winnipeg on March 1st and 2nd, 2017. For more information on the event, see this [link](#).

On April 6th the Sandbox Project will host the Sandbox Summit, an interactive event that will bring together stakeholders from all corners of Canadian child and youth health and wellbeing including researchers, practitioners, policy makers, charities, corporate Canada, families and young people. Together, participants will identify our sector's most pressing challenges and find new and innovative ways to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Canada's young people. Register [here](#).

The CYCC Network would like to draw attention to their next Wisdom2Action event on March 24, 2017 in Ottawa. "From Trauma to Resilience" will be a community knowledge sharing event on promising practices regarding response to and prevention of sexual violence. Register [here](#).

The Children and Nature Network is holding an [international conference](#) on April 18th-21st, 2017 in Vancouver, BC, for inspiring keynotes, expertly-curated workshops, field trips and action labs designed to support and advance the work you do to connect children, families and communities to nature.

The Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation, in partnership with The Jimmy Pratt Foundation, will be hosting the first ever Institute on Early Childhood Education in the Atlantic Provinces in Halifax this summer on August 24th and 25th. To access [more information](#) on this event, subscribe to their mailing list.

## Information Docket



Developed by the Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education, [Heart-Mind Online](#) is for all those who are searching for evidenced-informed resources that educate the hearts of children. The collection of resources builds capacity in individuals and communities to support the Heart-Mind well-being of children, and promotes their positive social and emotional development.

The Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development has announced a Call for Proposals for the 14th Annual Summer Institute in Toronto, Ontario, June 2, 2017. The 14th conference theme

addresses inequities in Canada through early childhood education and developing new frameworks for early learning and childcare. Jurisdictions are using the occasion to update their early childhood policies. [Submissions](#) are due by March 17th, 2017.

## Training and Workshops

New and expectant mothers now have access to expert advice and support for breastfeeding 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, through a telephone advisory service. This [free service](#) is provided by registered nurses and experts who have received training in breastfeeding and lactation support. The service is provided in English and French, with access to telephone interpreters in more than 100 languages and a direct TTY number for those with hearing and speech difficulties.

YouthActionNet's 2017 Laureate Global Fellowship annually recognizes 20 young leaders who have pioneered solutions to urgent challenges in their communities and beyond. Fellows develop leadership expertise and deepen their impact through a dynamic, yearlong learning experience, and join a network of nearly 1500 changemakers like them who continue to benefit from learning opportunities and connections throughout their social change careers. You must be between 18-29 years of age. [Applications](#) must be submitted by March 6, 2017.

## Community Resources

The Best Start Resource Centre is conducting an [assessment](#) to help the Public Health Agency of Canada plan potential health promotion materials and strategies to increase public awareness about the importance of taking folic acid to reduce the risk of birth defects. They would like to hear from anyone whose work is related to preconception and pregnancy. Surveys completed before March 10th will be entered to win a \$50 gift certificate. Additionally, the Best Start Resource Centre is also developing an online, searchable, bilingual directory of prenatal education programs in Ontario to help providers and individuals find services that meet their needs. An [online survey](#) is being used to gather information about prenatal programs.

The Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada is seeking new parents and parents-to-be for its [survey](#) on parents currently expecting a baby or on maternity/parental leave. This joint research is a project of the Childcare Resource and Research Unit and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and is aimed at improving strategies to help families access child care and developing better understanding of parents' use of child care and parental leave.

There is a [call for nominations](#) for the International Children's Peace Prize. If you know an outstanding child between the ages of 12 and 17 that has contributed to the enhancement of children's rights, nominations are being accepted until March 17th, 2017.

## NACY's Recommended Reads

The Toronto Foundation has compiled together a [list of books](#) reflecting on what it means to be Canadian. This list has been curated to fit in with Canada's 150th anniversary celebration.



You can still add your voice to NACY's national network of organizations by visiting [nacy.ca](http://nacy.ca) and registering today.

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