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National Alliance for
Children and Youth

L'alliance nationale pour
l'enfance et la jeunesse

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NEWS IN THE SECTOR



UNICEF's efforts to mobilize youth and child development discussions is a focus this month. This reflects a collective growth in awareness of issues concerning child development in Canada. Notably, early in January, UNICEF launched a new campaign aimed at increasing awareness about the importance of a child's life and the impact of early experiences. The [Early Moments campaign](#) provides digital and print resources for parents and caregivers, in

hopes of encouraging them to provide their children with the best possible start in life. This campaign is part of UNICEF's broader program on early childhood development.

More recently, UNICEF Canada reacted to growing criticism from child poverty experts of stagnating rates of kids growing up low-income, which have remained around one-in-five in B.C. for years. David Morley, President and CEO of the United Nations agency, spoke at B.C. Poverty Reduction Coalition Conference on January 16th. Alongside him were advocates from First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition and the Single Mothers' Alliance: "Part of our work at UNICEF is to remind anyone who will listen - both in governments and the private sector...to put children first," Morley suggested. UNICEF believes the solution is increased investment in early years' services, including nutrition, adequate housing, and pre- and post-natal care for mothers. The fact that Canada has fallen 26th place in the world when it comes to economic inequality is the reason why UNICEF Canada is addressing high child poverty rates in urgency; it is likely a strategy in making an impact weeks before the provincial budget is set to be discussed. The article can be read [here](#).

POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C. has been calling for \$10-a-day child care for several years. This month a new report was released; authored by economists and family policy researchers, the report indicates that the \$10-a-day plan has the potential to boost BC's economy in three year's time. The plan would also create more jobs during the construction of new child care spaces, and provide more opportunities for early childhood educators, he says. It predicts that by 2020, the plan would cost the government \$1.1 billion but generate \$1.2 billion in taxes, with gains widening in the years ahead. Read the report [here](#).

Parents in Toronto are concerned with the city's budget proposal to eliminate a grant that helps fund daycares in schools and provides childcare centres with the means to pay for the general maintenance of daycare spaces on school property. Revocation would save the city approximately \$3.39-million over two years, but parents would have to take on those costs through an increase in fees of as much as \$1.35 a day. Removal of the Occupancy grant would make regulated childcare even more expensive for those families paying full fee and put it farther out of reach for many families, further confirming studies showing that 75 per cent of families in Toronto find licensed childcare unaffordable. NACY encourages you to read the [news segment](#) in full.

Child and Youth Advocate Del Graff handed in a written submission to the Alberta legislative committee asking that changes be made to allow the Advocate's Office to provide better support to those who need mental-health services. The office can currently only offer mental-health support to

young people caught in the justice system or involved with child welfare. The committee listened to 27 presentations and accepted written submissions as well. In total, 65 proposals were made. The committee is expected to complete its review of the Child and Youth Advocate Act by the end of June. See the article [here](#).

The Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth is reviewing British Columbia's Representative for Children and Youth Act. The act informs advocacy for children, youth and families; monitoring of the child and youth serving system; and reviews, investigations and reports of critical injuries and deaths of children. The purpose of the review is to determine its effectiveness and determine whether amendments are required. Written, video or audio submission are accepted; the deadline is Friday, Feb. 10th, 2017, with a consultation period expected to continue later in 2017. Apply [here](#).

FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ontario is accepting applications for the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund, which supports local, regional and provincial organizations that offer programs and services to keep Ontarians active in sport, recreation and physical activity. [Applications](#) are being accepted until February 1, 2017.

The Canadian Women's Foundation is accepting proposals for its 2017-2018 Annual Violence Prevention Grants. Approximately 30 grants will be selected to a maximum of \$20,000 each. If your organization and work fits the selection criteria, you may apply for additional funding of up to \$3,000 to assist with access costs. The submission deadline is February 6, 2017. See the [grant guidelines](#).

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 we are looking to bring on a 17th! The [application](#) process is now open and ends March 31st, 2017.

The Calgary Foundation is accepting a second round of applications to the Community Fund for Canada's 150th. The Community Fund is a national initiative and collaborative effort seeded by the Government of Canada and extraordinary leaders from coast to coast; the initiative is matched and delivered locally by Canada's 191 community foundations. [Apply](#) by February 24th.



The federal government will be investing up to \$780,000 in 4-H Canada to host the 2017 Global 4-H Network Summit. The Global 4-H Network Summit will take place in Ottawa, in July of 2017 and will coincide with the 150th Anniversary of Confederation. With an allocation of over \$200,000 available, applications are open December 01, 2016 - March 01, 2017 to receive between \$500 to \$2500 dollars to host a 4-H youth led community celebration. Apply [now](#).

Events and Opportunities



Children First Canada's Sarah Austin and The Globe and Mail's André Picard will moderate an upcoming discussion called '*The Kids Are Not Alright: The Urgent Need for a National Dialogue to Invest in the Wellbeing of Canada's Children*' on February 23rd. NACY highly recommends purchasing [tickets online](#) for this important event.

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 UBC Arts Internship Program provides non-profits in Vancouver and the lower mainland the chance to host undergraduate students from the Faculty of Arts as interns at no cost. Students are available for summer internships beginning in May and are eligible to volunteer with an organization for 8-12 hours per week for a duration of 4-8 months. The [proposal submission](#) deadline is flexible around January 30, 2017, with internships beginning in May 2017.



A reminder that the annual Children the Heart of the Matter Conference is coming up on February 17-18, 2017 in Surrey, BC. A great lineup of keynote speakers and workshop presenters is on the agenda. You can register [here](#).

The Canadian Conference on "Promoting Healthy Relationships for Youths: Breaking Down the Silos in Addressing Mental Health & Violence" will be February 15th-17th in London, Ontario. [Registration](#) is open now.

INFORMATION DOCKET



The Government of Ontario wants to hear your ideas about how we can help improve access, flexibility, affordability and quality of child care and early year programs and be responsive to family needs. The public consultation for child care expansion strategy for winter 2017 is open until January 31st, 2017. Share your [feedback](#).

Ontario's Healthy Smiles Program is designed for families in need of support. Children 17 years and under, providing access to access free dental care including cavity check-ups, x-rays, scaling, tooth extraction and emergency services for those that are eligible. More enrollment instructions and details on who qualify, visit [here](#).

Canada Revenue Agency is urging people who are planning on growing their family this year to apply for the Canada Child Benefit offered to eligible families. For an overview and link to application, visit the [website](#).

Training and Workshops

The Laidlaw Foundation is seeking youth-led groups to identify issues that are affecting our communities and implement projects that address and/or increase awareness of these issues. The foundation is hosting a Youth-Led Community Change Program. It will run through a multitude of webinar sessions, starting with a sixty-minute demonstration on how to apply for funding by staff. For more information, visit this [link](#).

Given that January has focused a great deal on mental health initiatives, NACY would like to emphasize what a great resource the Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute is for accessing practical and professional strategies in working with youth struggling against complex mental health issues involving self-harm. It can be viewed [here](#).

Community Resources

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.

Right to Play's Promoting Life-skills in Aboriginal Youth (PLAY) program partners with more than 85 First Nations communities and urban Aboriginal organizations across Canada to deliver safe, fun and educational programming for Aboriginal children and youth. To learn more about the program, visit the [website](#). Volunteer opportunities also exist [here](#).

Family Literacy Day was on January 27th this year. NACY believes this day an opportunity to highlight Winnipeg author David A. Robertson's [new book](#), which aims to teach children as early as in kindergarten about the painful history of residential



schools. Additionally, we recommend Today's Parent's [social justice books](#) aimed at teaching young children about privilege and socioeconomic differences.

January Spotlights

In accordance to recent studies identifying Canada as having the third highest suicide rate among youth, Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler is calling for a coordinated emergency response by federal and provincial health care and mental health agencies for Wapekeka First Nation following the suicides of two 12-year-old girls since the weekend, bringing to foresight a crisis the government is facing. The call to action was followed with a comprehensive report documenting the ongoing suicide pandemic in the Mushkegowuk communities along the James Bay coast. It can be accessed [here](#). As well, *We Matter*, a national multimedia campaign designed to gather positive messages from people across the country, has been in full force in response to these developments. The website has videos offering messages of hope to Indigenous youth. You can download your own video [here](#).

Thematically, this month has greatly focused on mental illness. The Bell Let's Talk campaign on January 25th came in conjunction with many organizations tackling mental health stigmas. Kids Help Phone and Boys, Girls Clubs of Canada and Girls Guides of Canada, with the launch of their [Mighty Minds program](#), was among them. NACY commends their efforts and hopes this signifies a brighter future.



NACY's Recommended Reads

YouthREX has just published a new report called Game On. This research focuses on youth, age 12-25, with a priority given to youth who face barriers to accessing sport and physical activity programs, primarily because of poverty, but other barriers are also considered. Special attention is on what structure non-competitive community-based sport and physical activity programs can affect in positive wellbeing outcomes for youth facing psychosocial barriers. Read the [complete report](#) now.

The BC Council for Families has offered a ParticpACTION Report Card on physical activities for children and youth. Canadian kids have received a "B" grade on sleep. This adds to an existing narrative that suggests lack of sleep enhances hyperactivity; struggles with problem solving and lower scores on IQ tests, increased risk of obesity, diabetes and hypertension and higher rates of depression and suicidal thoughts. The assessment can be found on the BCCF's [blog](#).



You can still add your voice to NACY's national network of organizations by visiting nacy.ca and registering today.

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