



Annual Report 2010-2011

**NACY**   
National Alliance for  
Children and Youth

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# Whither our children and youth?

During the past five years it has been very difficult to advance a realistic policy agenda to improve the lives of children and youth in Canada. The preoccupation of 'retail politics' in a minority Parliament has resulted in little progress on the critical issues facing our children and youth, and rather has caused us to lose both direction and momentum.

The adage that "failing to plan, is planning to fail" comes readily to mind when thinking about how we are fulfilling our national responsibility to better plan for the future of our children and youth.

There have been significant problems that impact on the development of young people. The economic crisis of 2008 continues to dramatically affect young people and their families with sustained levels of high unemployment, particularly for youth, growing income disparity, high child poverty rates of 15 – 16%, constrained public investments or reductions in areas such as education, post secondary education, early child development, family support, mental health, child welfare, and the list goes on.

There is a great lack of national data available on significant aspects of national child and youth development (this is an important deficiency to be remedied), although the scant information that exists shows decidedly mixed results, which should be of concern. For example, comparative international studies from credible organizations such as the OECD and UNICEF indicate that there are serious issues to be addressed in important areas as youth substance abuse, parenting skills and relationships, and early child development where Canada is falling behind. It is very difficult to keep track of how are young people are doing without good national data reporting. Although, Canada has a national social reporting system in place, the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA) is unused to the point of irrelevance and urgently requires modernization. This shortcoming in a wealthy, federal state such as Canada is highly problematic as it blinds us of our ability to measure, analyze and plan for our future. The next report from the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2012 will raise this deficiency again.

The most recent attempt at a comprehensive national policy on children and youth, "A Canada Fit for Children" (2004) was abandoned as an orphan of political change prior to having any impact on planning for children and youth. The follow up 2006 Senate report 'Children: The Silenced Citizens' contained important recommendations for a child and youth policy agenda that also has not been acted upon.

Our current situation in Canada is dire, and there does not yet appear to be a broader awareness or consensus about the nature of the problem beyond the community of child rights advocates. This is particularly concerning situation, as we recognize that the issues confronting children and youth are complex and multi-faceted, and solutions take time to implement. The consequences of our inaction today, have implications on young people for many years to come. Having inclusive early child development programs now to address later problems with youth crime is an obvious example.

There is ample information to indicate that there are major gaps, limitations and problems associated with our services for children and youth. Although there are some excellent programs within provinces and territories, federal programs for high risk children, development of a national mental health strategy and most recently the announcement of a national commission on the education of aboriginal children and youth, they are all limited by the lack of a thoughtful, well coordinated and continuous approach to measuring and monitoring our progress on child and youth development.

The most important activity of NACY, as a national, umbrella children's rights organization, is to actively advocate for change to this highly unsatisfactory situation regarding the development of our young people. We clearly understand that the lack of awareness and planning regarding young people is a significant risk factor for future generations of Canadians, and the country in a highly competitive, globalized world. Canadians would be shocked, dismayed and perhaps disbelieving to understand that there are such serious deficiencies in our ability to plan for our future. The imperative for action, must take us beyond the rhetorical, and often incorrect information that we have about how are children and youth are doing.

Building the pan Canadian (national) framework is achievable and within our grasp with the appropriate leadership and collaboration amongst governments, civil society and the participation of young people.

During this next four years of relative stability in national politics it will be of critical importance to inform and influence Canadians, thought leaders and politicians alike to elevate young people on the public policy agenda in Canada.

There are many important ideas and innovations to be addressed. National leadership in convening, coordinating and supporting child and youth policy development is urgently needed. As governments in Canada re-negotiate the Canada health and social transfers in 2013/14, determining the priorities of federal funds directed toward the future development of young people must be the predominant consideration. There is an excellent opportunity to modernize reporting and monitoring on the progress of young people, create greater collaboration and accountability to improve outcomes for our young people.

A national conference to set the child and youth policy agenda would be an important place to start to address the urgent deficiencies in our planning for child and youth development in Canada.



Peter M. Dudding  
*Co-Chair, National Alliance on Children & Youth*



## NACY Members from 2010-2011

Big Brothers and Sisters of Canada

Boys & Girls Club of Canada

Canadian 4-H Council

Canadian Aids Society

Canadian Association for Community Living

Canadian Association of Family Resource  
Programs (FRP Canada)

Canadian Association of Social Workers

Canadian Nurses Association

Canadian Paediatric Society

Canadian Teachers Federation

Canadian Unitarian Council

Child Welfare League of Canada

Invest in Kids

Kids Help Phone

Laidlaw Foundation

Landon Pearson Centre for the Study of  
Childhood and Children's Rights

Muttart Foundation

PREVnet

Scouts Canada

Social Planning Council of Winnipeg

Vanier Institute

YMCA Canada

YOU CAN

YWCA Canada

# Reflections on NACY's 5th Anniversary

Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead  
where there is no path and leave a trail.

~ Harold R.

With a vision of a Canada in which all children and youth are thriving, the National Alliance for Children and Youth (NACY) was formed five years ago by a group of individuals who were active in the child and youth sector and had been involved with the National Children's Alliance.

Building on the work of the National Children's Alliance, which began in 1996, NACY has provided a unique opportunity for wide cross-sectoral membership and perspective about issues facing children, youth and their families. Our first five years of existence have focused on:

- Developing ways to support the sector and its participants,
- Influencing policy,
- Advancing the knowledge of the sector,
- Being a voice for the sector, and
- Facilitating dialogue and collaboration within the sector.

The purpose of NACY – *to promote the health and well-being of children and youth in Canada in ways that are beneficial to the community* – continues to be as critical as ever. I often say that if NACY didn't exist, someone would create us.

We have much to celebrate as we reflect on the past 5 years. NACY members and supporters have had the opportunity to help us ensure children and youth are not forgotten. They have leveraged our unique role and cross-sectoral perspective as the voice of the child and youth sector to facilitate the kind of debate and discussion that will create the Canada we all envision for our children and youth.

Many thanks to the continued support and confidence of so many colleagues through membership fees and in-kind services. NACY relies upon the dedication and participation of so many committed volunteers and organizations to support and build a network to promote a well-balanced approach to human development. We are greatly appreciative of these efforts that span from local communities to the national level. A special thanks for the dedicated and hands-on voluntary efforts of our Board of Directors and other volunteers. We appreciate all you do, every day, to further NACY's work!

Extreme gratitude also goes to our lead coordinator Amanda Mayer, and our Taking Stock project team, Michelle Dagnino and Dr. Grant Charles. Without all of whom this year would not have been the successful year it was.

Some highlights of NACY's undertakings of the past year include:

- securing funding for a 3-year project funded by HRSDC: Taking Stock, and hired Michelle Dagnino as our project director;
- hosting our first Child & Youth Think Tank Session in Ottawa;
- giving our website a makeover: we have streamlined, refreshed and enhanced it making it a key resource for child and youth communities across Canada;
- continuing to build our presence within the social media channels of Facebook and Twitter;
- built a SuperSearch feature: a one-stop source for searching a range of websites within the child & youth sector at your fingertips;
- producing the popular e-Digest full of important events, initiatives and policy work being done by the many great organizations in the sector;
- launching the first of two Surveys that we are conducting to 'take stock' of the state of organizations in the child and youth sector and their ability to deliver on their missions;
- participating on national advisory committees and attending national and regional forums;
- initiating a policy development committee that has worked on the release of a policy statement to all parties on the need for a greater focus on children, youth and families;
- meeting with the new Deputy Minister of HRSDC, Mr. Ian Shugart, to discuss the significant social policy issues concerning young people and families.

As we move ahead, we will build on the success of the last 5 years. Together we will continue working towards making Canada a better place for children and youth to grow and thrive.



Yours in peace,

Dave W. Farthing  
Board Co-Chair & Treasurer

# NACY Gets a Makeover!



Building on months of work to offer an up-to-date, content rich website, we have taken our online communications one step further this year. We have refreshed our logo and streamlined and enhanced our website making it a key resource for child and youth communities across Canada.

Our overhaul resulted in a content and user review where we restructured the site's resources, added new content areas and also created a space to profile 'What's New'. In seeking to be a central place for organizations working with children and youth, we have also built exciting new features for users that include:

- **A SuperSearch Engine:** A one-stop source for searching a range of websites within the child & youth sector at your fingertips.
- **A Resource Centre:** for sharing information and innovation, etc.



NACY's new website seeks to be a central place where organizations working with children and youth can come to for:

- General information about children and youth in Canada,
- Resources for agencies working with children and youth in Canada,
- Sharing and networking ideas and issues,
- Finding specific information on topics by using our unique SuperSearch feature.

So we are pleased to welcome you to our new National Alliance for Children and Youth (NACY) website! We hope that you visit us often as we will feature more online developments that will make it easier to keep in touch and share stories and innovation going on across Canada.



Amanda Mayer  
*NACY Coordinator*

# Taking Stock: Supporting Canadian Child and Youth Agencies in Economic Crisis

Providing the knowledge and leadership required to mobilize our members and partners in communities across Canada to “take stock” and identify how our most recent economic crisis impacts our sector is the main goal of NACY’s Taking Stock project.

As soon as the project funding was approved by the Social Development Partnership Project of HRSDC, in January of 2010, NACY hit the ground running and formed the Project’s Advisory Committee (TSAC). The Committee’s first task was to kick-off the project within the child and youth sector by ratifying the project’s goals, objectives and activities.

Given the scope of the project, NACY’s Board and Project Advisory Committee determined that the most effective way to inform and gather sector participation and input was to conduct a national Think Tank Session. This Think Tank Session served to: a) Inform Sector/Community leaders from across Canada about the project;

- a) Inform Sector/Community leaders from across Canada about the project;
- b) Gather experience and recommendations from Sector/Agency leaders;
- c) Motivate participation and support from the Sector/Agencies for the project;
- d) Allow questions and healthy discussion/feedback about the project.

The Taking Stock Think Tank was held in Ottawa in March 2010 and included representation from across Canada. Over the day and a half, sector leaders heard from a number of presenters and shared their own stories of the challenges the Child & Youth Sector is facing. Sector leaders from were able to readily identify solutions which would work not only in their own organizations but also in the communities in which they work. A tremendous amount of knowledge was transferred over this short period of time and it confirmed that there is such strength in our leadership within this sector, though there is still much work to be done to encourage our next generation of leaders. This Think Tank experience gave participants evidence of how their shared knowledge and experience could lead them to find solutions and support each other to achieve transformational change if given the opportunity to network and a central mechanism to obtain information and share knowledge. Acknowledging that solutions can be found through shared experience and by discovering how others across Canada were problem-solving, Think Tank participants unanimously recommended a series of project activities to give the sector more timely, relevant and adaptable solutions.

NACY then began a series of activities focused on building resources about improving the sector including:

- Conducting evidence-based case studies to better reflect the sector's diversity from communities in the Western, Central and Atlantic Regions of Canada.
- Gathering information, learnings and solutions to some of the most pressing issues facing the sector through Regional Think Tank sessions and Focus Groups.
- Surveying members to gauge the impact of the economic downturn on the Child & Youth Sector over time.
- Building a new "supersearch" feature on the NACY website enabling users to search through child and youth sector and other relevant websites using just one central search engine.

2011 promises to be another busy year for NACY, including:

- Think Tank sessions and Focus Groups in Western, Central and Atlantic Regions of Canada.
- The release of the survey results gauging the impact of the economic downturn and continued monitoring via a partnership with Imagine Canada.
- The publication of case study reports sharing innovative solutions and learnings about how local agencies are dealing with issues such as increased service demands, reduced funding, broader delivery mandates and more happening around Canada.

Stay tuned for project updates and developments throughout the year via NACY's e-Digest.



Michelle Dagnino  
*Project Director, Taking Stock*

*\*The Taking Stock Project is funded by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program*



## SuperSearch: child & youth sector resources at your fingertips!

NACY's new SuperSearch website feature is a custom built search engine that finds information related to the child and youth sector in Canada, through one central site. Using key words, SuperSearch not only searches NACY's website, but also websites of each partner organization to find reports, blog posts, articles, best practices, etc. as it relates to children and youth. The SuperSearch Network continues to grow, thus increasing the resources available. Try it out and join ... it is free!

### SuperSearch Network list 2010-2011:

Abbotsford Community Services	Multiple Births of Canada
Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario	National Children's Alliance
Boys and Girls Club of Wetaskiwin	PHAC - Division Childhood and Adolescence
Canadian Child Care Federation	Quinte Community Learning-Bridging the Gap
Canadian Nurses Association	Smart Start Riley County
Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs (FRP Canada)	SEVEC - Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada
CANGRANDS National Kinship Support	The SPEC Association for Children and Families
Child Welfare League of Canada (CWLC)	UNICEF Canada
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC	The Vanier Institute of the Family
Girls Action Foundation	YOUCAN - Youth Canada Association
Kids Help Phone	Z Sonia Worotyneć Consulting
Laidlaw Foundation	

... and growing!



## Board of Directors 2010-2011

**Nancy Birnbaum**

Riverside Consulting, Toronto, ON

**Wendy Craig**

PREVNet (Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence), Kingston, ON

**Sue Delanoy**

Kinsmen Activity Place & Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada, Saskatoon, SK

**Jennifer Dickson (Secretary)**

Canadian Unitarian Council, Toronto, ON

**Peter Dudding (Co-Chair)**

Child Welfare League of Canada, Ottawa, ON

**Dave W. Farthing (Co-Chair & Treasurer)**

YOU CAN, Ottawa, ON

**Janice MacAulay**

The Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs, Ottawa, ON

**Tara Stang**

The Muttart Foundation, Edmonton, AB



# Financials

**ASSET**

<b>Cash</b>	
TD Chequing - General	12,413.57
TD Chequing - Project	<u>69,548.23</u>
<b>Total Cash</b>	<u>81,961.80</u>
<b>Other Assets</b>	
GST Receivable	2,636.49
HST Fed portion receivable	3,006.20
HST Prov portion receivable	<u>7,359.07</u>
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	<u>13,001.76</u>
<b>Capital Assets</b>	
Laptop computers	2,698.83
Data Projector	<u>610.08</u>
<b>Total Capital Assets</b>	<u>3,308.91</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSET</b>	<u>98,272.47</u>

**LIABILITY**

<b>Liabilities</b>	
Accounts Payable	82,671.73
Accrued Liabilities	<u>1,091.58</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u>83,763.31</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITY</b>	<u>83,763.31</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>	
<b>Equity</b>	
Retained Earnings	11,173.97
Current Earnings	<u>3,335.19</u>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u>14,509.16</u>
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<u>14,509.16</u>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<u>98,272.47</u>



## Stay Connected



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@NACY\_ANEJ



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National Alliance for Children and Youth (NACY)



**Check out our photos on Flickr**

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/nacy-anej/>



**Visit NACY's website**

[www.nacy.ca](http://www.nacy.ca)

Photos courtesy of NACY's member organizations and affiliates:

Canadian Cancer Society

Canadian Women's Foundation

Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada / Code Blue for Child Care Campaign

Children's Cottage Place

Children's Miracle Network

United Way Centraide Windsor Essex County

YOU CAN



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