



Statement

April 6, 2009

REPRESENTATIVE ACKNOWLEDGES CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION DAY IN BC

Physical and emotional maltreatment of children are all too prevalent. A focus on child safety is central to the work of my Office. It drives us to advocate for improvements to the child-serving system so the children it serves are safe and their futures as promising as those of their peers.



However, to prevent harm to children we also need to look beyond what is visible, and consider the inherent rights of all children. Barriers to educational success and optimal health, insufficient supports to combat poverty and restricted access to necessary services mean we continue to fail our vulnerable children. These realities impact children throughout their lives and prevention must be pursued with the utmost urgency.

Monday, April 6th is Child Abuse Prevention Day in B.C. We all need to be sure that child welfare professionals are supported to do their critical and difficult work. Each of us also needs to be willing to take responsibility to contact the appropriate authorities, and act each and every time we become aware of an abusive situation involving a young person. Lillian Katz, the internationally recognized early childhood education expert, said: "I really believe that each of us must come to care about everyone else's children. We must recognize that the welfare of our children is intimately linked to the welfare of all other people's children." I encourage British Columbians to take this idea with them into their daily lives.

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond
B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth