



# Statement

---

## REPRESENTATIVE CELEBRATES NATIONAL CHILD DAY

**November 20, 2010**

November 20<sup>th</sup> is National Child Day. The date celebrates the occasion when Canada adopted the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC).

As B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth, the work of my Office is based on these rights and we ensure that the following values are upheld: that children have a right to be protected and kept safe, that families are the best environment for raising a child, and that parents and extended family have the primary responsibility for a child and that decisions made about a child should include their own views and input. Upholding these rights is fundamental to improving outcomes for vulnerable children and youth in British Columbia.

In keeping with these rights, B.C.'s Provincial Health Officer, Dr. Perry Kendall, and I recently released a special report called *Growing Up in B.C.* It takes a sweeping look at young lives across the province, using as wide a lens as possible to examine the state of British Columbia's children and youth.

In order to get a more complete understanding of the youth perspective on these topics, we consulted over 200 youth from across the province, to get their very important views. This feedback helped us form questions and ensure the study includes *Growing Up in B.C.* youth opinions and ideas not previously included in well-being reports.

I encourage you to visit our website to read *Growing Up in B.C.* While you're at our website, please also take a moment to look under the "Events" tab, and enjoy the hundreds of colorful art and essay submissions B.C. children and youth made to our Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> Rights contest last year.

I'll also take this opportunity to mention a new initiative to raise awareness in the general public about children's rights, specifically the UN Convention on the Rights of Children.

The campaign, a partnership between my office, the Society for Children and Youth and other organizations, begins with transit ads on buses throughout B.C. Eventually some video clips will run before movies in public theatres, and a new website has also been launched – [www.everychild.ca](http://www.everychild.ca) .

National Child Day 2010 should serve as a reminder to all of us that we must ensure young people have every opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them. A better future for all children and youth in the province depends on our ability to listen to their voices and learn from what we hear.

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond



Representative for Children and Youth, British Columbia