

Continued from part 1 (split for file size, not in original report)

# FOR CANADA'S CHILDREN

NATIONAL AGENDA FOR ACTION



Report  
of the  
Canadian  
Commission  
for the  
International  
Year of  
the Child  
1979





# 7

## Play and recreation



Birgitte Nielsen



## PLAY AND RECREATION

Play and recreation are vital to the development of the potential of children and young people. But in Canada, society's indifference to the importance of play and recreation seriously limits children's opportunities. The Canadian Commission is specifically concerned about the inadequate allocation of play space and the inadequate quality of existing space; the lack of access to affordable play and recreation programs and facilities for all young people, especially for the handicapped and low income; the present emphasis on competitive rather than co-operative and creative play; the low priority given to recreation research; and the lack of financial support for leadership training. Therefore we recommend that:

7.1 governments and local authorities give the same priority to the out-of-school life of children and adolescents as they do to the provision of formal education or the building of roads and parking places.

7.2a governments and other decision-makers provide increased support for professional and volunteer play leaders who perform a valuable service as play facilitators.

7.2b steps be taken to improve training and educational opportunities for play leaders.

The importance of people rather than the equipment must be stressed if the play and recreation needs of children and adolescents are to be met.

7.3a appropriate government departments be given the mandate, including adequate funding, to increase the level of public awareness for the need for play and recreation.

7.3b these departments have, in addition to the mandate to provide services, a grant-giving capacity to encourage the development of alternate programming and research by non-governmental bodies.

Federal programs such as Children's Environments Advisory Service (Health and Welfare Canada) and the Consumer and Corporate Affairs safety products programs, plus such non-governmental groups as the Canadian Toy Testing Council must be strengthened rather than weakened. Provincial departments of

Target Groups  
governments at all levels, education authorities, non-governmental agencies and organizations, universities, community colleges, government subsidizing agencies

federal, provincial and municipal governments

- Recreation, Culture and Youth should be established where they do not exist and strengthened where they do.
- 7.4a plans for new or renovated housing developments incorporate play and recreation environments into their designs. Target Groups  
all levels of government
- 7.4b prior to giving planning approval or financial subsidies to housing developers, the government body responsible ensure that play environments have been given the same priority for inclusion in the project as other aspects.
- 7.5 community participation, including that of children and adolescents, be part of the planning, design and implementation process for all new play environments and activities. municipalities,  
agencies responsible  
for play environments
- Play and recreation environments must be made more relevant to local conditions, ethnic considerations and young people's needs.
- 7.6 play be recognized as an integral part of the treatment process for children and adolescents who have been placed, temporarily or permanently, in institutions that limit access to community recreation activities. all levels of government,  
general hospitals,  
children's hospitals,  
training schools,  
treatment centres
- Children and adolescents who must be removed from the normal community either through illness, physical or mental handicaps or because of conflict with society must be given access to play activities and a recreation environment so that they can cope more effectively with stressful situations.
- 7.7 children's needs--physical, social, intellectual and emotional--be given greater consideration in planning human settlements and play space in urban areas. city planners,  
architects,  
municipal councils,  
the building industry
- The needs of the smaller child, especially, should be taken into consideration in the design of structures, parks and community recreation centres so that these facilities do not present obstacles to the child's enjoyment.
- 7.8 all bodies involved with play activities for children and adolescents create more opportunities for unstructured, creative play and all levels of government, the  
general public

place less importance on the structured, competitive aspects of play.

Decisions-makers must develop innovative programs that challenge the imaginations of young people and give consideration to providing more open space in urban and rural areas to encourage unstructured play activities.

7.9 play and recreation activities be developed for children that encourage the integration of handicapped children with non-handicapped children.

7.10a government support the Canadian Toy Testing Council in its work of testing toys for safety, play value, relative quality, durability and price.

7.10b support be given so that the findings of the Canadian Toy Testing Council may be communicated to the general public, including children.

Target Groups

all levels of government, toy manufacturers, parents, the general public, educators, child care personnel, hospital authorities

A more informed industry and toy-buying public will better meet the needs of children by encouraging play activities that nurture the child's total development.

7.11 government support toy-lending libraries staffed by professional child-guidance workers.

all levels of government, community groups, the general public

This important new and growing service to parents and children should be strengthened by making available professional staff to augment parents' information on child development.

We commend:

7.12 the Canadian Council on Children and Youth publication Fair Play Codes,<sup>1</sup> which emphasizes the true value of non-competitive play in organized sports.

all levels of government, private agencies, the community, the general public

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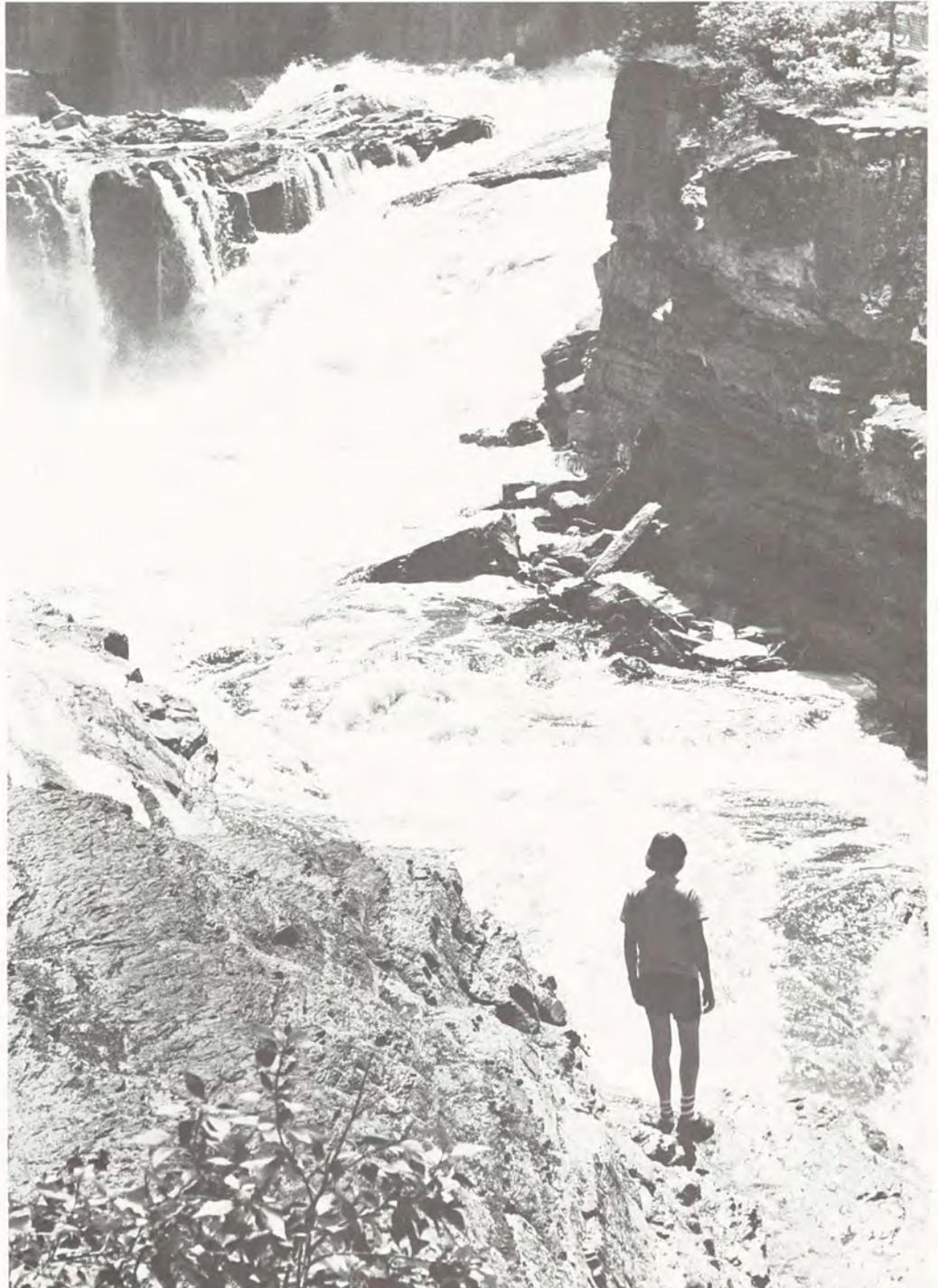
1. Canadian Council on Children and Youth, Fair Play Codes for Children and Sport (Ottawa: Canadian Council on Children and Youth, 1979).





# 8

## Nature and the environment



Birgitte Nielsen



## NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Nature and the environment have a profound effect on the well-being of children. An appreciation of nature, and of the plants and animals that are part of the natural world, is fundamental to the full education of the child. And the effect of the environment--whether natural or man-made--on children has been well documented. Therefore preserving the balance of nature and maintaining and improving the environment should be of primary importance to Canadians.

Decisions made today about such issues as land use and energy development, for instance, will play a large part in determining the future of generations to follow: adequate farmland is needed for food production, and adequate energy resources are essential for a bright future. However, such decisions should not be made without concern for the environment.

In the last decade it has become increasingly evident that our natural environment will be seriously damaged if precautions are not taken to prevent the pollution of the air we breathe, the water we drink and the soil on which our food supplies depend. As well, if future generations are to have the opportunity to observe and enjoy the great wilderness areas and magnificent natural beauty of this country, all species of wildlife must be carefully protected and allowed to live in plentiful numbers in their natural habitats.

Of more immediate concern is the urban environment in which many Canadian children now live. It is vital that these children live in cities that allow for their health and happiness. High-rise apartment buildings, noise pollution and limited space do not contribute to the favourable development of children. Large urban communities of the future must be designed or redeveloped so that they are appropriate environments for children.

The recommendations that follow are addressed to the main areas of concern regarding nature and the environment. Throughout, the emphasis is on care and concern in the decision-making process that will have a profound impact on the future of Canada's children.

### Energy Development and Land Use

We recommend that:

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|-----|---|---|
| 8.1 | all Canadians ensure that the children of the future have adequate supplies of energy and sufficient areas of farmland to maintain plentiful food production. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>governments at all levels, all Canadians      |
| 8.2 | future land-use laws and regional and urban planning take into account the need to preserve land for food and forest production.                              | federal, provincial and municipal governments                         |
| 8.3 | governments at all levels preserve and protect wilderness areas, sites of natural beauty and  | federal, provincial and municipal governments, recreation authorities |

all species of wildlife indigenous to this country.

### Pollution Control

We recommend that:

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|-----|---|--|
| 8.4 | every possible effort be made to leave to the children of the future a pollution-free environment so that they may continue to enjoy the air, the water and the rich soils of Canada. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal, provincial and municipal governments, school and recreation authorities |
| 8.5 | funding be provided to the scientific community to investigate the long-term effects of pollution on the physical health of children.   | federal government   |
| 8.6 | government and related agencies develop and enforce appropriate pollution control legislation and mechanisms.   |  |
| 8.7 | children be encouraged to share the responsibility of maintaining and preserving the physical environment.  | school authorities, teachers, parents  |

### Urban Development and Recreational Planning

We recommend that:

- |      |   |   |
|------|---|---|
| 8.8  | a human-scale approach to planning be an integral part of municipal programs to avoid large-scale urban development.  | <u>Target Groups</u><br>provincial and municipal governments, school and recreation authorities |
| 8.9  | the process of the planning, design and management of the environment involve the participation of the total community, including its children. Professionals should work to encourage community self-reliance. |   |
| 8.10 | urban development and renewal programs include the design of appropriate spaces for children so that the living environment is in harmony with the growth and development needs of children and their families. |   |
| 8.11 | mini-parks and block playgrounds with trees, lawns, gardens and, when possible, mini-animal   |   |

farms be developed as part of the "greening" of Canadian cities.

- |      |  |   |
|------|--|---|
| 8.12 | special outdoor opportunities be created, with bicycle paths, hiking paths, cross-country ski trails, as well as mini-farms, etc. To ensure access to these facilities, special means should be provided by public transportation systems. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal, provincial and municipal governments |
| 8.13 | the impact on the environment of any building projects or industrial development be assessed prior to approval.  |   |
| 8.14 | government and local authorities refuse approval and subsidies to inappropriate housing forms, such as high-rise apartments, in order to avoid increasing the negative effect on children of existing inappropriate housing.               |   |

## Education

To ensure that the children of today develop into adults who respect nature and the environment, nature-study and outdoor-education programs should be available in schools and community centres. These programs should be designed both to help children acquire a genuine appreciation of nature and the environment and to teach them the fundamental skills for safe enjoyment of the outdoors. Therefore we recommend that:

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|------|---|---|
| 8.15 | school and community programs include nature study, outdoor education and urban environmental education so that all children learn to appreciate and respect their environment and thereby develop favourable attitudes towards it. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments, school recreation and authorities |
| 8.16 | a comprehensive program of outdoor education concerned with such topics as conservation, wildlife management, land management and pollution be initiated by provincial and territorial governments for school-aged children.        | provincial and territorial governments  |
| 8.17 | every child in Canada have the opportunity for outdoor education within the formal education system at least once in fall, winter and spring. This could take the form of "classes rouges, de neige ou vertes" or camping.          |   |

We recognize that some action has already been taken in Canada on the above

recommendations, but much more has still to be done to improve the present situation. In recognition of the environmental deterioration that has taken place since the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, we recommend that:

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|------|--|--|
| 8.18 | the Government of Canada include the right to a healthy environment in the Rights of the Child in Canada and campaign for its inclusion by the United Nations in the International Declaration of the Rights of the Child. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal government |
|------|--|--|



# 9

## Children and health



Birgitte Nielsen



## CHILDREN AND HEALTH

Canada is one of the world's most affluent countries. No major war, famine or disease threatens us, yet the health status of our children is lower than a significant number of other developed nations, and many of our children are exposed to risks that are entirely preventable. Children in Canada should all enjoy normal and healthy childhoods, protected by the society in which they live from hazards and threats to their physical and mental well-being until they are old enough and strong enough to look after themselves. It is the aim of the recommendations that follow to reduce external hazards to our children's health and to increase the child's own capacity to meet and surmount the mental and physical challenges of growing up in an unstable world.

### Best Possible Babies

In Canada, maternal mortality and morbidity have been reduced to very low levels, but fetal and neonatal mortality and risk of handicaps are still substantial. As of 1977 in Canada, the infant mortality rate per 1000 live births was 12.4 as compared with Sweden's 8 per 1000. Canada ranks ninth, below other industrialized nations such as Denmark, Finland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and Spain.

Perinatal death rates vary widely from province to province. For example, in 1976, the perinatal mortality rate (stillbirths and live-born infants over 500 g up to one week after birth) was 13.8 in Alberta and 18.9 in Prince Edward Island.

Even more important from a humanitarian and economic viewpoint are the numbers of children affected with potentially avoidable handicaps. Of the approximately 330,000 babies born each year in Canada, about 25,000 will be low birthweight, and as many as 33,000 will be at risk of handicap. It is estimated that it costs between \$500,000 and \$1-million to maintain a severely damaged individual over a lifetime. About 1500 of these babies are born each year in Canada.<sup>1</sup>

Not all handicaps can be prevented. But it has been estimated that at least half could be prevented or the risk substantially reduced with improved prenatal and perinatal care. Much of the knowledge required for the prevention of handicaps already exists. The problem is in implementation. The key issue is the need for a reproductive care system that provides:

- a. regular prenatal care and supervision for all mothers;
- b. the early identification of high-risk pregnancies and referral to units equipped to give the quality of care needed;
- c. information and counselling for parents

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1. Source: Joan C. Brown, "Prevention of Handicap: A Case for Improved Prenatal and Perinatal Care" (Ottawa: Canadian Institute of Child Health background paper, 1978).

- about the effects of nutrition, smoking, alcohol and drugs on the unborn;
- d. quality care in the delivery and nursery;
- e. the screening of newborns for early recognition of deviations in such areas as hearing, vision, development, PKU, hypothyroidism and congenital abnormalities so that treatment is started immediately whenever possible.

Therefore we recommend that:

- 9.1 the provincial governments review their system of obstetrical and newborn care with a view to implementing a regional plan.
- 9.2 every hospital with an obstetrical service establish a perinatal committee to review the care being provided and to take appropriate measures to improve that care.
- 9.3 governments at all levels make educational material available to the public on the effects of nutrition, alcohol, smoking and drugs on the fetus.
- 9.4a provincial governments adopt a policy making maternal and child health a priority for the next five years.
- 9.4b the Canadian Institute of Child Health and the Coalition for the Prevention of Handicap be asked to co-ordinate these efforts and report on the situation again in five years.

Target Groups

ministries of Health and Welfare and Community Services, Health and Welfare Canada, professional organizations involved in maternal and child health, the public, municipal health officers

**Immunization**

Despite safe, effective vaccines, many Canadian children are not being adequately immunized.<sup>1</sup> The objectives of the recommendations that follow are to ensure that at least 95 per cent of all children are immunized on entrance to day care or nursery and/or school, and that this

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1. Health and Welfare Notifiable Diseases Summary for the week ending September 8, 1979 reports that, according to provisional figures, there were 21,475 cases of measles, 7434 of rubella, 52 of diphtheria, 1353 of whooping cough and 2 of polio reported in Canada. There has been a significant increase in 1979 of both measles and rubella over 1978 figures.

immunization be updated as required. We also hope to make governments, professionals and parents aware that it is a child's right to be protected from potentially dangerous diseases that are preventable. Therefore we recommend that:

- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 9.5 | a national immunization policy and schedule be adopted.  | <u>Target Groups</u><br>Health and Welfare Canada,<br>ministries of Health,<br>parents |
| 9.6 | an extensive public education program be coordinated between the federal and provincial governments to make the professionals and parents aware that children are not adequately protected at present.       | medical officers of health,<br>occupational health,<br>health professionals            |
| 9.7 | a personal record card be made for every newborn child, and that parents be informed that it is their responsibility to keep this written record of the vaccines received by the child (date, type, dosage). |  |

## Nutrition

Poor nutrition is one of the most important issues in child health in Canada today. Associated with malnutrition are many other physical problems, such as obesity, lethargy, anemia and dental problems. And these may lead to more serious complications, among them diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, allergies and infections. Severe social, emotional and physical handicaps may result. Children would be supported in their growth and development by proper nutrition. Therefore we commend:

- |     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 9.8 | recommendations 1 to 8 of the National Council of Welfare as stated in the report on nutrition, <u>One Child, One Chance</u> . <sup>1</sup> | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal and provincial<br>ministries of Health,<br>Education and Agri-<br>culture, school boards,<br>parent groups, consumer<br>groups |
| 9.9 | the approaches being taken by Health and Welfare Canada and the Canadian Paediatric Society to promote breast-feeding.                      | farm groups, profession-<br>al groups, researchers<br>manufacturers, suppliers   |

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1. National Council of Welfare. One Child, One Chance: A Report on Nutrition by the National Council of Welfare. Ottawa: National Council of Welfare, 1973

- 9.10 the position paper, "Infant and Child Feeding", prepared by the Canadian Home Economics Association. This paper "emphatically supports breast-feeding as the best choice for infants" and makes twelve recommendations concerning infant and child feeding.<sup>1</sup>

## Hospitalization

Despite what we know about the effects of hospitalization on children, many hospitals still do not provide open visiting, parent accommodation or organized daily play programs. There are also no recommended standards of care for children in units in general hospitals. The aims of the recommendations that follow are to humanize the care of children in hospitals, to promote healthy emotional and developmental care for children, and to implement a set of standards by 1981 by which children's units can be accredited. We recommend that:

- 9.11 all hospitals with children's units have organized play available under a designated child-life worker.
- 9.12 all hospitals with children's units have open visiting for the child's parents or parent designate, and that rooming-in facilities be made available for parents.

Target Groups  
hospital associations,  
ministries of Health,  
Health and Welfare Canada,  
consumer groups,  
nursing, medical and  
social work professional  
organizations, Canadian  
Council on Hospital  
Accreditation

We commend:

- 9.13 the federal government for establishing an Expert Group on Child Care in General Hospitals to develop and implement a set of standards or guidelines for the care of children in general hospitals.

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1. Canadian Home Economics Association, "Infant and Child Feeding," Canadian Home Economics Journal (Fall 1979): 199-201.

## Accidents

In Canada in 1974, over 37 per cent of the deaths of children ages nineteen and under were due to poisonings, violence and accidents, especially motor vehicle accidents, drownings and fires. Many of these accidents could have been prevented. Therefore we recommend that:

- 9.14 a standard system of accident reporting (such as those of the United States or Britain) be agreed upon between Statistics Canada and the provinces to gather information on the 0 to 16 age group, and that this system be extended to include adults at a later date.

### Target Groups

Statistics Canada  
ministries of Health,  
Transport, Recreation  
and Education,  
provincial hospital  
associations, medical  
associations, consumer  
groups

A standard system of reporting and exchanging information would facilitate a comparison of accident rates across Canada, leading to an examination of lines for prevention.

- 9.15 infant and child car-seat restraints for children weighing under 50 pounds be made mandatory in all provinces and territories.
- 9.16a school busses be equipped with seat belts, and that their use be made compulsory.
- 9.16b standards for the construction of school busses be reviewed and safety standards established.
- 9.17 all children participating in sports have adequate information on, and access to protective equipment.
- 9.18 child accident centres be set up across Canada in children's hospitals and/or major teaching centres (sixteen in all).

The role of these centres would be to develop on-going educational programs directed at parents and children, to promote a safety-conscious attitude in the community, and more specifically to:

- a. provide expert service and care for child accident victims;
- b. develop a community education program to promote safety consciousness among both children and parents;
- c. provide twenty-four-hour public information for poisonings and all other accidents;

- d. collect facts and figures on childhood accidents;
- e. do research studies related to accidents and accident prevention;
- f. provide an advisory telephone service, twenty-four hours a day, for individuals and organizations;
- g. produce television commercials on hazards, indicating to the public how they can contact the child safety centre for advice on any aspect of child safety;
- h. advise parliamentary committees as to additional or amended legislation needed.

## Dental Health

Dental problems result from poor nutrition and poor dental care habits. Fewer than 50 per cent of Canadians see a dentist annually, and close to 10 per cent of Canadian children never brush their teeth. To put dental care within reach of every child in Canada, we recommend that:

- 9.19 every province adopt a comprehensive dental-care program for children.

Target groups  
ministries of Health and Education,  
parent groups,  
dental associations

We commend:

- 9.20 the Canadian Dental Association's stand on fluoridation.

## Adolescent Sexuality and Pregnancy

Studies have indicated that some adolescents lack an understanding of their bodies and sexual functioning as well as the consequences of sexual behaviour. There is a need, therefore, to establish more effective programs within our school system, not only to provide adolescents with information on human sexuality, but also to make them aware of the moral and social responsibilities associated with sexual behaviour. The objectives of these recommendations are better prenatal, perinatal and postnatal medical, physical and psychological care for mothers and babies; greater assistance in reaching sound decisions on the mother's and the child's futures; more "responsible" teenagers; and the prevention of teenage pregnancies. Therefore we recommend that:

- 9.21 family life education be included in all high school curricula.

- 9.22 schools revise curricula to include material

Target Groups  
ministries of Health and Welfare,  
ministries of Education,  
medical associations

- on the subject of shared responsibility in sexual relations, as well as on the consequences of irresponsibility.
- 9.23 social counselling, family planning associations and groups review their informational material to ensure that shared responsibility with emphasis on the male role is well covered, and that concerted outreach to boys in the community be attempted.
- 9.24 a complete range of support services be available in a multidisciplinary context to pregnant girls in all communities.

Target Groups  
hospitals,  
social service agencies,  
parent groups, interested  
volunteer and consumer  
groups, such as Planned  
Parenthood

### Health Education and Health Services

Medical research has documented the detrimental effects of certain lifestyles, such as those involving drug abuse and poor nutrition. Yet comprehensive age-appropriate health education is not available to children and adolescents who are at a key time in their lives--a time when they are absorbing and integrating important habits, social skills and behaviour. In short, children and adolescents lack accurate scientific information about the effects of certain lifestyles on their future health.

There is a real need for school systems to provide health education guidance in their curricula under the direction of, or planned by professionals in the health field. Such courses should be directed towards improving the general health of Canadian children and promoting a sense of self-responsibility for one's own health. In this regard, we commend:

- 9.25 the action recommended by the Committee on Student Health and Health Education in Canadian Approaches to School Health Education and Services.<sup>1</sup>

Target Groups  
ministries of Health and  
Education, school boards,  
parents, professional  
associations, parent-  
teacher associations

### Physical Fitness

Since physical activity contributes to our overall physical and mental health, we believe that proper recognition and funding should be provided to improve children's fitness. Therefore we recommend that:

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1. CEA Health Committee, "Action Recommended by the CEA Health Committee" in Canadian Approaches to School Health Education and Services (Toronto: Canadian Education Association, 1978), pp. 55-57.

- 9.26 there be compulsory physical education within the schools once daily, with special emphasis on activities that can be continued throughout an individual's life.
- 9.27 adequate funding be allocated to fitness in current provincial government preventive programs as a means of preventing mental health problems, and that physical activities be incorporated into existing mental health therapy programs.
- 9.28 families be encouraged to spend time together in physical activities.
- 9.29 businesses encourage employees' physical fitness and provide incentives to promote physical activity programs with special emphasis on family activities.

Target Groups  
Ministries of Health and Education, the media, businesses, the public

We commend:

- 9.30 the "lifestyle" approach outlined in New Perspectives on Health of Canadians,<sup>1</sup> which emphasizes the need for recognizing the importance of physical activity.

### Mental Health

The Celdic Report<sup>2</sup> has documented that Canada has more than one million children with learning and/or emotional disorders. Action should be taken to minimize the occurrence of these problems, specifically by modifying stressful environments and by strengthening individual capacities to cope with stress. To prevent emotional illness and to support families and the nurturing of their children, we recommend that:

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1. Marc Lalonde, A New Perspective on the Health of Canadians (Ottawa: Queen's Printers, 1974).
  2. Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children, Study Committee, One Million Children (Toronto: L. Crainford for the Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children, 1970).

- 9.31 the target areas suggested in the family service grid in The State of the Art: A Background Paper on Prevention<sup>1</sup> receive special attention from health professionals and provincial governments.

Target Groups  
health professionals,  
ministries of Health  
and Education, parents

We commend:

- 9.32 the Thistledown Recommendations presented at the international symposium "New Directions in Children's Mental Health" in Toronto in 1977.<sup>2</sup>
- 9.33 the recent report of the Children's Services Division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services of Ontario, The State of the Art: A Background Paper on Prevention.

### Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Many studies indicate that increasing numbers of adolescents are using tobacco, alcohol and drugs. To educate adolescents about the harmful effects of alcohol and drug abuse, we recommend that:

- 9.34 school health programs stress the dangers of the use and abuse of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, and the importance for the individual of assuming responsibility for developing a healthy lifestyle.
- 9.35 employers, in conjunction with employees, set up employee assistance programs for drug and alcohol problems.
- 9.36 businesses take a more responsible position when promoting the sale of products that are potentially hazardous to health.

Target Groups  
ministries of Education,  
school boards, corpora-  
tions, industry, govern-  
ments, all employers,  
advertisers, labour  
unions

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1. Naomi R. Grant, The State of the Art: A Background Paper on Prevention (Toronto: Children's Services Division, Ministry of Community and Social Services, 1979.)
  2. Canadian Mental Health Association and Thistledown Regional Centre, Tomorrow's Children (Toronto: Canadian Mental Health Association, 1978).





# 10

## Children and culture



Birgitte Nielsen



## CHILDREN AND CULTURE

Just as play and recreation are vital to the development of all children, so too is exposure to culture or, more specifically, to the arts. Through the arts children can learn about themselves, about other people and about other times. Through the arts they can learn to channel their imaginative and creative processes in a way that is both fulfilling and challenging. In short, exposure to the arts can help children develop their full potentials as individuals and as members of a society.

As a society we can only benefit by ensuring that our children have access to the arts and help from people who have been trained to recognize and foster creativity, rather than ignore it. This means giving the arts high priority in government policies, our educational system and in society as a whole.

### Policy

We recommend that:

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|------|---|--|
| 10.1 | the cultural needs and contributions of children in all regions be recognized as a factor of Canadian life and be given consideration in the planning and designing of government policy.   | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal, provincial and territorial governments, ministries of Education, arts councils, local governments, teacher organizations, professional arts organizations, cultural and ethnic organizations, student councils, parent-teacher organizations, the media |
| 10.2 | the federal, provincial and territorial governments, through their cultural institutions (i.e. galleries, museums, theatres, cultural centres, etc.), give priority to encouraging the cultural development of all young Canadians.   |  |
| 10.3 | federal policies affecting artistic development recognize the contributions that can be made by young people in Canada in many fields of the arts. In particular, assistance should be extended to children with special needs and special talents.   |  |
| 10.4 | ministries and boards of Education recognize the central role of creativity in developing the potential of the young, and that their policies take cognizance of this. A conscious effort should be made to dispel the notion that creativity and the arts are expendable in the curricula, or that they are not part of the central thrust of the educational process. | ministries of Education, school boards   |

## Education

We recommend that:

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|------|--|---|
| 10.5 | the federal government, in consultation with the appropriate provincial and territorial government agencies, develop and fund programs that would make it possible for recognized artists to have direct contact with children and young people in all parts of Canada.  | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal, provincial and territorial governments |
| 10.6 | the appropriate agencies attach high priority to the training and upgrading of teachers who can impart the skills necessary for creative and artistic development.   | ministries of Education, faculties of Education, teacher associations   |
| 10.7 | the ministries of Education, in designing teacher training programs, include instruction in the arts, so that teachers can use their knowledge in the teaching of conventional subjects at all levels.   |   |
| 10.8 | teacher organizations, in their dealings with school boards and provincial and territorial governments, stress the importance of an awareness of the creative process. Governments and local boards of Education should be urged to upgrade teacher training in the arts and culture and to give priority to the removal of administrative obstacles which inhibit more dynamic approaches to instruction in the arts and culture. |   |

## General

We recommend that:

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|-------|---|--|
| 10.9  | the electronic media systematically explore methods of giving exposure and recognition to the creative and artistic endeavours of younger children. Media programming could encompass not only productions for children, but also productions which children have helped to conceive and develop. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>the media                        |
| 10.10 | the Department of the Secretary of State organize a "children and the arts dialogue" in 1980 to examine such topics as: education and the arts, public policy and the arts and the media and the arts.  | Department of the Secretary of State, Secretary of State |

The purpose of this dialogue would be to bring together the social scientists, philosophers, educators and leading participants in the various arts to develop a comprehensive contribution to the Secretary of State's Cultural Commission Report.

One-third of Canada's population (persons under eighteen years of age) have little or no opportunity to make their views, ideas, interests and concerns heard in adult society. Recognizing that there are significantly fewer obstacles to the airing of these views when they are communicated through art, we recommend that:

- 10.11a in order to make known the interests and concerns of the young, there be established a national creative centre to which all young people across Canada could contribute their ideas through their original creative work.
- 10.11b such work be collected at the centre and be displayed to the public.
- 10.11c the materials be exhibited, published, performed and circulated widely throughout the country.

Target Groups  
children and youth,  
government, corporations  
and private individuals  
for funding and sponsorship





## Television and the media



Birgitte Nielsen



## TELEVISION AND THE MEDIA

### THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA

After family and school, the mass media, particularly television, is probably the most important influence on the attitudes, values and behaviour of young people in Canada. In some cases, where the family structure has been weakened, television may even replace parental influence. In most cases, studies have shown, television absorbs more of a child's time than does school. Some of the problems with respect to children and the mass media are common to most advanced, industrialized countries, but Canada has special difficulties owing to its proximity to the United States and to the American domination of the airwaves.

Given the extraordinary impact of television, and to a lesser extent radio and films, it is imperative to ensure that the influence of the mass media is beneficial for children, or, at very least, not harmful.

Towards a policy that recognizes the special needs of Canadian children we recommend that:

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|------|---|--|
| 11.1 | the need for quality broadcasting for children be recognized by all responsible bodies, and that policies be formulated to bring about necessary improvements in the shortest possible time.  | <u>Target Groups</u><br>presidents of CBC, CTV, Global, Télémedia and CRTC |
| 11.2 | the urgent need for the creation of high-quality Canadian-content programs be addressed by making their creation a priority, by allocating sufficient funds for them and by imposing regulations that are rigorous with respect to the quality of Canadian content. | NFB, CBC, Canada Council, CRTC   |

With respect to the quantity of time devoted to children's programming, we commend the achievements of Radio-Canada and the Ontario Educational Communications Authority in this regard, and we recommend that:

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| 11.3 | all television channels follow the example of Radio-Canada and the OECA by allocating a minimum of 20 per cent of their broadcast time to programs for children and young people. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>CBC, Global, Télémedia |
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In order to improve the quality of television programs for children we recommend that:

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| 11.4 | television networks make a special effort to commission more children's programs developed in Canada. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>all TV networks |
| 11.5 | when networks purchase children's programs from other countries, the choice be made care-             | all networks                            |

fully with the best interests of children in mind.

Programs such as "Sesame Street" or "Once Upon a Time" should be given priority, whereas programs with excessive violence should not be purchased.

Professional development is an essential component of quality broadcasting. Therefore we recommend that:

- 11.6 increased opportunities be provided for workshops and training of professionals involved in children's broadcasting. Target Groups  
the television industry

Media publicity and public recognition help to stimulate achievement in broadcasting. We commend the awards established by the Children's Broadcast Institute, and we recommend that:

- 11.7 other awards, similar to the Actra Award for the Best Children's Program, be considered to obtain wide publicity. Target Groups  
the television industry

Conscious that we still know too little about the interaction of children and television, and of the contribution that quality programming could make in children's lives, we recommend that:

- 11.8 increased research be undertaken into the problems and issues associated with children and television.

Improvements in quality are of little use unless programs are properly promoted and distributed throughout Canada. Therefore we recommend that:

- 11.9 special attention be given to promoting and publicizing children's programs in Canada, and that existing organizations such as the Children's Broadcast Institute be strengthened to act as cross-country resource centres for quality television. Target Groups  
editor of TV Guide,  
TV Hebdo, all newspapers  
CBI

Promotion and distribution cost money. We deplore recent cutbacks in children's television budgets, and we recommend that:

- 11.10 the English-language CBC allot a larger percentage of its budget to children's programs than it has in the past. Target Groups  
president of CBC
- 11.11a advertising revenue from children's programs be reinvested in children's programs. TV networks,  
federal government,  
Minister of Finance
- 11.11b tax incentives be developed to encourage

private stations to improve standards of children's programming.

Although government and the television industry share the responsibility for controlling the quality and quantity of children's programs, children themselves, their teachers and their families have a very important role to play in controlling the impact of television. To ensure that our children are educated viewers, we recommend that:

- 11.12 understanding the media be considered a basic skill, and that all young people be educated to develop critical viewing and listening skills. Children should also be taught to read newspapers and magazines with appropriate caution.

Target Groups  
ministries of Education, boards of Education, Canadian school trustee associations, home and school associations, teacher federations, youth groups, faculties of Education

Young people should be able to make informed judgments about what they see, hear and read so that they can use the media, rather than be used by it. It should be accepted that skills in understanding the media involve learning how to use media equipment to create television shows, films, radio programs and newspapers.

- 11.13 teachers be encouraged to use their students' media experience as part of the curriculum, rather than undervaluing or ignoring it.

Families have a special responsibility with respect to children and television. Since the television set is in the home, there is a special need (and opportunity) for parents and other family members to control the influence of television on the lives of the young.

There is ample evidence to show that most of the negative effects of television can be nullified if adults take the time to watch television with children, to discuss disturbing material with them and to regulate the time children spend watching television. The example of adult viewing habits in the home also has a significant effect on young children.

Therefore we recommend that:

- 11.14 parents recognize their great responsibility with respect to the influence of television and the other media on their children and take appropriate measures to ensure that the influence is a positive one.

Target Groups  
parents and others who have children in their care

- 11.15 parents protest loudly to their local stations and cablevision companies when they are concerned about the quality and content of television and radio programming in their area.

Children watch many programs that are not designed for them, and we believe that the producers and directors of those programs have a certain responsibility to the young people watching them. Therefore we recommend that:

- 11.16 the producers and directors of television programs reduce the present emphasis on sex and violence.

## Advertising

The issue of advertising is an important one, and we are concerned about the effect of exploitive advertising on children. We recognize that without advertising there would be even less programming for children than presently exists. And we are aware that some action is already being taken in Canada to control advertising. In this regard we commend:

- 11.17 the "Broadcast Code for Children" accepted by the Association of Canadian Broadcasters and the "Canadian Code of Advertising Standards".

We urge advertisers to sponsor programs which are age-specific, rather than programs designed to appeal to all ages, even though the resulting audience may be smaller.

## Film

We commend:

- 11.18 the creation of the Children's Film Institute and applaud its work.

## Radio

Although there is a very large radio-listening audience of children and young people, little effort has been made to produce programs for and with them. We recommend that:

- 11.19 all radio stations make time available to programs for young children and develop more varied programs for older children. Target Groups  
all radio stations  
and networks

We commend:

- 11.20 The Children Are Watching<sup>1</sup>, a report commissioned by the Assembly of Arts Administrators of Canada for the International Year of the

Child and offer our support to its recommendations.

## THE PRINT MEDIA

### Children's Books

Canadian children deserve the opportunity to read books by Canadians about our culture and our heritage. Our books, like the books of no other nation, can reflect the diversity of this country as well as the unifying ties that each child has with other Canadian children. Yet at present, only 8 per cent of the books bought for and by our children are Canadian.

Because the vast majority of books read by children in this country are imported, and because the domestic market is relatively small, Canadian children's book and magazine publishers must struggle even to survive. And without a strong children's publishing industry, few Canadian books will reach their market, the children.

One way to strengthen the children's publishing industry is for the schools and libraries that serve children to buy Canadian books. Today the average print run for a Canadian children's book is 4000 copies. But if each of the 9000 elementary schools with libraries across the country purchased only one copy each of all Canadian children's books, the print run would more than triple. As a result, books could be priced lower, more money could be spent making the public aware of the books, more books could be published--all because Canadian schools and libraries used Canadian tax dollars to support Canadian books.

If our children are to have the books they deserve, it is crucial that a healthy climate for Canadian children's book publishing be developed both within our institutions and in the general marketplace. Therefore we recommend that:

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|-------|---|---|
| 11.21 | ministries of Education in each province establish a policy making the use of Canadian-authored materials, both texts and extra-curricular materials used in school libraries, a priority in our schools.                                     | <u>Target Groups</u><br>ministries of Education   |
| 11.22 | arts funding bodies, such as The Canada Council and provincial arts councils, allot separate support funds to children's book production which, because of the cost of printing in colour, is much more expensive than adult book production. | arts funding bodies, Canada Council, all provincial arts councils or groups responsible for culture |

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1. Assembly of Arts Administrators of Canada, The Children Are Watching: A Survey of Children's Broadcasting in Canada and Some Recommendations for the Future (Toronto: Assembly of Arts Administrators of Canada, 1979).

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|-------|--|--|
| 11.23 | the Canadian Library Association and all provincial library associations establish or expand policies of support for Canadian children's books. Such policies should focus on purchasing and on on-going professional-development programs to make children's librarians familiar with new Canadian books. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>the Canadian Library Association, provincial library associations, ASTED |
| 11.24 | all sources of book reviews assign a minimum of 20 per cent of their review space to children's books, with a strong emphasis on Canadian materials.   | all sources for book reviews   |

### Text Books

Text books play an important role in developing Canadian awareness. We commend the initiatives taken by the Government of Ontario, which is the only provincial government requiring Canadian-written and produced materials in its public school system, and we recommend that:

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|-------|--|---|
| 11.25 | other provinces follow the lead of the Ontario government in order to re-establish the industry after its decline of the last two decades. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>Council of Provincial Ministries of Education |
|-------|--|---|

Increased co-ordination among national and regional curricula would help to increase the size of the market so that the high development costs of Canadian texts could be amortized.

### The Press

Members of the press have a special responsibility to children. We recommend that:

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|--------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 11.26a | a serious effort be made to focus on children's issues in the daily press.   | <u>Target Groups</u><br>the press |
| 11.26b | children be treated with particular respect in stories that involve them.  |                                   |
| 11.26c | an association of journalists for children be developed in Canada similar to those which exist in most European countries. |                                   |
| 11.26d | opportunities be provided in newspapers and magazines for children and young people to participate on a regular basis.     |                                   |

We commend:

- 11.27 the introduction of children's pages in certain newspapers, such as "Starship" in the Toronto Star.

### All Media

We deplore the exploitation of children in any way, whether as consumers, as performers or as stereotypes. The use of children in the production of pornographic material is absolutely unspeakable.

Care and thought should be given to the way in which children are portrayed in the media. One way to ensure a positive image for children in both the electronic and print media is to invite their participation. We commend the involvement of children which has taken place in some radio programs in English-speaking Canada, and we recommend that:

- 11.28 children be increasingly involved in the media Target Groups  
in all roles. the media





# 12

## Children and the law



Birgitte Nielsen



## CHILDREN AND THE LAW

The Canadian Commission is aware of the current law reform activities and of legislation being developed within the federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions on behalf of children and their families.

We commend the provincial governments and their law reform bodies and the federal Law Reform Commission for their work in the reform of existing laws pertaining to children. We urge these jurisdictions to ensure that all legislation in Canada be consistent with the principles of the Rights of the Child promulgated by the United Nations.

### Law Reform

Both the private sector and the government are responsible partners in the process of identifying issues and promoting changes in legislation that will best serve the interests of the child. Children must be foremost in the minds of legislators when laws are being reviewed and enacted. Therefore we recommend that:

12.1a all law reform bodies make every effort to consult representative voluntary organizations, as well as government agencies, in the review and reform of legislation pertaining to children.

#### Target Groups

all voluntary organizations concerned with children, all government agencies, all law reform bodies

12.1b all organizations concerned with children closely monitor the reform, amendment and development of new legislation pertaining to children as well as any legislation that will affect the quality of life for children in Canada.

### The Child as Person

Children, like adults, are persons in their own right. Although most jurisdictions provide lawyers for juvenile offenders, counsel is not available to children for many other legal matters. In many cases, children are not a party to actions and decisions affecting their lives. We recommend that:

12.2 jurisdictions ensure the child has access to independent legal representation and is party to actions and decisions pertaining to guardianship, custody, determination of status and property and damage, as well as juvenile offences.

#### Target Groups

departments of Justice

One of the main difficulties in the matter of legal representation of children is that of lawyers taking instruction from children. Lawyers specially trained in this field should be available to aid children who are unfamiliar with the legal process. Therefore we recommend that:

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|------|--|---|
| 12.3 | in keeping with our belief that each child has a right to legal representation, legal-education bodies establish special training programs so that lawyers can acquire the skills to speak with children, to explain their rights to them and to assess their needs. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>faculties of Law,<br>law societies,<br>bar associations |
| 12.4 | that Section 43 of the Criminal Code be immediately examined in depth by the Minister of Justice with the object of eliminating discrimination against children.   | Minister of Justice   |

The Criminal Code renders all forms of assault between adults a criminal offence. However, Section 43 exempts children from this protection by stating that "correction by force... where reasonable" is permitted with children. That assault, even if "reasonable", is permitted where children are concerned suggests that the legal status of children is different from, and inferior to that of adults.

Although not responsible for the circumstances of his or her birth, a child born of an unmarried mother is often victimized by these circumstances. Therefore we recommend that:

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|------|--|---|
| 12.5 | all Canadian jurisdictions which have not already done so abolish the concept of illegitimacy as a legal status. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>provincial ministers of Justice |
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### Child Custody and Maintenance

In Canada, there is no uniform age of majority. The laws which govern maintenance provisions and custody orders also vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. In most instances, this absence of uniformity results in the victimization of children. We recommend that:

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|------|---|--|
| 12.6 | in an effort to ensure uniformity across Canada, the Uniform Law Conference of Canada direct renewed attention to the laws governing the following areas: custody orders, maintenance payments and age of majority. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>Uniform Law Conference of Canada |
|------|---|--|

Parents who ignore court maintenance orders cause undue hardships for their children. A recent study conducted at the University of Michigan Law

School by David L. Chambers suggests the establishment of a nation-wide system of direct child-support deductions from wages as the best remedy to this problem. Therefore we recommend that:

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|------|---|--|
| 12.7 | the Law Reform Commission of Canada accelerate its studies and present recommendations on more effective means of enforcing maintenance orders. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>Law Reform Commission,<br>provincial governments |
|------|---|--|

Efforts to establish international reciprocal arrangements in cases of parental kidnapping have only been partially successful, and many countries still do not respond to negotiations for the return of children to the custodial parent. We deplore the increasing incidence of child kidnapping and recommend that:

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|------|--|---|
| 12.8 | the federal government take immediate appropriate action to eliminate the instances of kidnapping of children by non-custodial parents at all levels, both national and international. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal and provincial<br>governments |
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### Sexual Exploitation

More and more, the problems of child pornography and child procuring are occurring across the country. Therefore we recommend that:

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|------|--|--|
| 12.9 | the federal government enact legislation to protect children against all forms of sexual exploitation. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal government |
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We commend:

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|-------|---|
| 12.10 | Report Number 10 of the Law Reform Commission of Canada and the brief of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women on Bill C-51. |
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### The Child in Conflict With the Law

Current legislation is not relevant to the issues presented by adolescents in conflict with the law. New young offenders' legislation has been prepared several times in recent years but has not yet been passed in Parliament. We recommend that:

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|--------|--|--|
| 12.11a | immediate action be taken to pass appropriate young offenders' legislation and to repeal the Juvenile Delinquents Act. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal government,<br>the Solicitor General |
|--------|--|--|

12.11b this new statute ensure that there is no gap between its reach and the age of majority in each province.

12.12 in the case of runaway children, enquiry into the home situation and consultation with the child be made compulsory for law-enforcement bodies, to evaluate the desirability of re-turning the runaway and ensuring him or her protection from harassment and/or retaliation upon being returned to the home.

Target Groups  
law enforcement bodies

## Law Enforcement

There are significant discrepancies between the requirements of legislation and the resources available to enforce legislation. For example, the tightening of child-protection laws creates a serious demand for support services such as lay helpers and foster homes, but such services have yet to be established in several provinces. Therefore we recommend that:

12.13 governments, particularly provincial governments, provide the human, physical and financial resources necessary for implementing legislation pertaining to children.

Target Groups  
provincial governments,  
federal government

According to studies conducted by Health and Welfare Canada and by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation, the incidences of highway fatalities associated with alcohol and involving young drivers (under the age of twenty-five) have increased substantially since the lowering of the drinking age in certain provinces. Therefore we recommend that:

12.14 provincial jurisdictions strictly enforce laws pertaining to the drinking age.

Target Groups  
provincial governments

## Education

Children in Canada today have too few opportunities to absorb accurate information about the law. Optional courses are offered at the senior high school level in some provinces, but only the Province of British Columbia has taken steps towards implementing a law unit for younger children. Yet research suggests that the opportunity to learn about the legal structure of the society in which they live should be available to all children, even the very young. Failure to understand the legal implications of their acts or the complexities of the legal system may lead young people to perceive injustices where none exist and to feel alienated from, or persecuted by a system they do not understand. Furthermore, if ignorance of the law is no excuse for an adult citizen, neither is it one for the younger citizen, whose status we are trying to upgrade.

If children are to act as responsible citizens, if we wish to involve them in legal decisions affecting them, and if we are to encourage their right to legal representation in court, then they must have greater knowledge and understanding of the law than is at present the case in Canada. Therefore we recommend that:

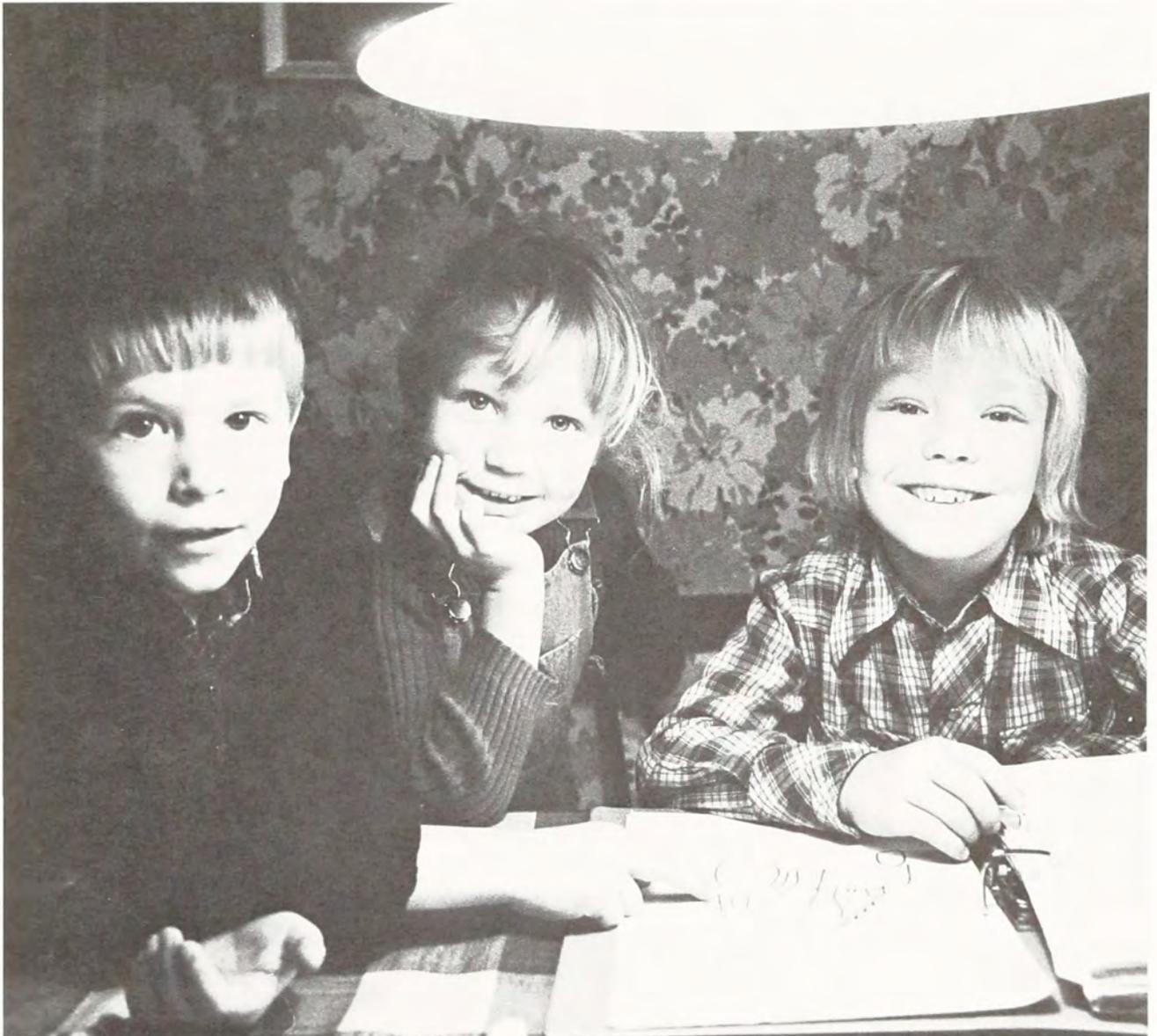
- |       |   |   |
|-------|---|---|
| 12.15 | all students in Canada be offered the opportunity both in elementary and secondary school to learn about, discuss and understand the nature and content of our laws, particularly those which affect them directly, the functions of our legal institutions and the law-making process. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>ministries of Education, boards of Education, parent-teacher associations, teachers |
|-------|---|---|





# 13

## General recommendations



Birgitte Nielsen



## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

As International Year of the Child progressed, a number of significant concerns were identified that did not fall into any of the preceding twelve categories. They are too important to the well-being of children to be ignored. The following recommendations have been formulated to address some general needs that became clear to the Commissioners during the year.

### The Spiritual Rights of the Child

Principle 2 of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child states: "The child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity." Yet in a world of increasing secularism it is easy for children's spiritual heritage to be undervalued and for the dimension of spirituality in their lives to be ignored.

In this context there are two kinds of rights which are appropriate to children--rights of recipience and rights of action. The first are denied when we fail to provide appropriate education and opportunities for children; the second when we deny them freedom of choice when they are old enough and experienced enough to exercise it.

To affirm the right of children to develop an attunement to, and a rapport with the transcendent values and ultimate realities of life, the five following spiritual rights were formulated.<sup>1</sup>

1. Right of Initiation

A child or young person has a right to the best of the spiritual heritage of the culture into which he or she is born.

2. Right of Expression

A child or young person has a right to express his or her spiritual belief in private and/or in public without discrimination.

3. Right of Choice

A child or young person has a right to deepen, doubt or alter the spiritual commitment into which he or she is being nurtured or educated.

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1. These spiritual rights of the child were extracted from a discussion paper written by John Bradford for the United Kingdom Association for IYC and published by the Church of England Children's Society, Old Town Hall, Kennington Road, London, England, SE114QD.

4. Right of Support

A child or young person has a right to family life, schooling and other institutional supports which shall be complementary to his or her spiritual development.

5. Right of Protection

A child, especially in his or her early life, has the right to such protection from spiritual damage and handicap as is reasonable and appropriate.

In support of Principle 2 of the United Nations Declaration of Rights of the Child and of Articles 18, 22, 26(2) and 27(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), we recommend that:

- 13.1 the five spiritual rights of the child be recognized by all those who have children and young people in their care.

### Children in the International Context

To keep children in the forefront of the world's concern and to facilitate the on-going, international exchange of information and ideas that has been so effective this year, we recommend that:

- 13.2 the activities of the international office of UNICEF be expanded to include an information, clearing-house function.
- 13.3 the International Year of the Child logo continue to be used as an on-going symbol of caring for children.
- 13.4 a resource centre, similar to the Information Centre on Children's Cultures, be established in Canada to respond to the demand for information that has arisen as result of the UNICEF/Red Cross Development Education project, "Why Should I Care?"<sup>1</sup>

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1. The Information Center on Children's Cultures is a service of the United States Committee for UNICEF, 331 E 38th Street, New York, New York 10016. It contains a library of educational and cultural materials in English about children of other lands, as well as primary source material created for, about and by children from many lands, with emphasis on children from the developing countries. The Center answers close to 5000 questions every year from all over the United States, prepares children's art exhibits for circulation across the country and performs a number of information functions.

## Children in The National Context

To draw the public's attention to the value of children to our nation on an on-going basis, we recommend that:

- 13.5 a national heritage day be held February 15 each year, and that this day be associated with children, that it become a winter holiday of joy and celebration, and that it become the anniversary date for the review of progress on the National Agenda for Action for Children and include a formal meeting between government and non-governmental organizations concerned with children.<sup>1</sup>
- 13.6 an annual award or awards be established for children to be presented by the Governor-General and his spouse and/or by the Lieutenant-Governors of the provinces to honour children nominated by their peers who have overcome, or coped exceptionally well with a difficult situation or handicap, or have shown outstanding concern for their fellows.<sup>2</sup>

## Research

Over and over again in the various areas we examined as we prepared our recommendations we came across the need for more empirical information about children and their problems. While the available scientific studies on child development are now substantial and solid, there is not nearly enough tested information about how to put that knowledge to practical use, or on how best to resolve the problems of children and families in the Canadian context.

Ideas are not lacking. The tremendous response to the Commission's Project Funding program produced a remarkable variety of possible solutions to problems. But an idea is not much use unless it can be put to the test more than once and shown to be effective in a number of separate but similar situations.

We believe there should be more grant programs available through government and elsewhere to encourage the translation of research into innovative problem-solving approaches. These funding programs should be flexible and accessible, particularly at the initial stages of a project when seed money is necessary.

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1. February 15, the anniversary date of the first raising of the Canadian maple leaf flag, is a particularly appropriate day for reflecting on our national heritage and on how and to whom we are passing it on.
  2. This idea was brought to us by the Metro Toronto IYC Steering Committee where it was developed by Deborah Cotton.

There is also a need for careful gathering of data on which to base policy decisions with respect to children. We do not, in Canada, have any comprehensive national data on children. Therefore we recommend that:

- 13.7 steps be taken towards instigating a national cohort study similar to the one begun in England in 1958, which took as its subjects all the babies born in the week of March 3-9, and which has been extraordinarily productive for research.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, it has been our experience that research on children ranks low as a priority for funding, in spite of the fact that most of the major risks directly confronting children today could be diminished, much physical or emotional damage could be prevented and many serious problems could be avoided or alleviated if only steps could be taken in time. Therefore we recommend that:

- 13.8 research monies be allocated all over the country for research into children's concerns.

### Support to the Non-governmental Sector

Public institutions such as schools have a tremendous influence on children's lives, but there are many non-governmental voluntary organizations that are also extremely important to children. Unfortunately, voluntary associations are particularly vulnerable in times of economic uncertainty: in an economic slowdown, people give less.

The needs of these organizations became clear to the IYC Commissioners when 4000 applications for program grants were received by our Project Funding Committee. Most of the proposals were very worthwhile, but all but a few had to be turned down because funds were limited. Some of these projects obtained support elsewhere, but many collapsed, and the community interest that created them subsided. Our experience was shared by the three provinces which also had project funding programs.

A tremendous amount of time and energy is expended by community groups seeking that minimal amount of money needed to get a project moving. Obviously it should be not too easy to obtain funding, but in a country that is in need of new and dynamic ways of addressing social problems, the energy and commitment of its concerned citizens should not have to be

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1. This study had its origin in a 1958 British perinatal mortality study. Its sample comprised over 17,000 children--all of the babies born in England, Scotland and Wales in the week of March 3-9, 1958. In 1964 it was decided to follow-up this cohort in their early school life. The first follow-up in what is now known as the National Child Development Study was undertaken by the National Children's Bureau. A second follow-up was mounted in 1969, when the study children were aged eleven. The third and most recent follow-up took place in 1974, when these children were in their final year of compulsory education. National Children's Bureau, 8 Wakeley Street, Islington, London, England, EC1V 7QE.

expended looking for money. In the long run, a small increase in the support to the voluntary sector would bring tremendous dividends to us all. The issue of grants is a complicated one, and we have not formulated any concrete recommendations. But we would like to add our weight to one proposal that we believe would strengthen the voluntary sector by making it more attractive for individuals to give to charitable organizations. We therefore support:

- 13.9 the Give and Take Proposal of the National Voluntary Organizations which recommends changing the tax structure to encourage giving to charitable organizations.<sup>1</sup>

### Advocacy for Individual Children

The need for a children's advocate is a very real one. Unfortunately the Commission has been unable to formulate an ideal structure to meet this need. One model is Sweden's ombudsman for children, but the Commissioners were uncertain whether such an idea would work in a country with as many jurisdictions as ours has. However, we would like to urge all parliamentarians to recognize their special responsibility to act on behalf of their young constituents.

### The Voice of Children and Youth in the Affairs of the Nation

The need for a structure or structures that would allow youth to have a real voice in shaping the country is obvious, and the Commission regrets that it has made so little progress towards addressing it. We have, however, recommended increased participation by children and youth in the decision-making process in all of the items on the National Agenda.

During 1979 many young people had new opportunities to sit on advisory committees, participate in group planning and to formulate recommendations at conferences to which they were invited. But these efforts by young people will falter unless they are sustained by moral and material support. Young people from coast to coast have suggested ways in which they are willing to participate in, and contribute to the life of our nation. It is up to us to ensure that some permanent structures emerge so that what they say and do will really matter. Perhaps by 1985, the Year of Youth, we will have achieved this goal.

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1. The Give and Take Proposal recommends the elimination of the automatic \$100. charitable income tax deduction and its replacement by a tax credit of 50 per cent of each charitable donation.





# 14

## Recommendations for future action



Terry MacCormack



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

The Canadian Commission for the International Year of the Child is concerned about the uneven and fragmentary nature of existing structures and programs concerned with children at all levels of government. At the federal level there is no central focus for the nation's concern for its youngest citizens. This reflects a lack of recognition for the pressing need to improve the quality of childhood in this country. Children should be a first priority for any state, but in the structure of the Government of Canada there is no place where they are the prime concern.

Canadian children are not just a family or a provincial responsibility; they are the responsibility of all the levels of government we elect to represent us. A mechanism must be devised to ensure that this responsibility is properly shared.

The Year of the Child has been a time to reflect upon and to assess the situation of children in Canada. However, in order for the year to have a lasting and permanent impact, there must be a way of ensuring that children's needs are kept in the forefront, that new perceptions of the rights of the child are reflected in long-term planning, and that the specific recommendations developed by the Commission are acted upon. To achieve this, we recommend that:

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|------|---|--|
| 14.1 | a reference point be established for children within the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs.   | <u>Target Groups</u><br>federal government |
| 14.2 | an implementation committee be struck as a subcommittee of the above to receive the recommendations of the Canadian Commission for the International Year of the Child and to oversee their implementation. | parliamentary committee members            |

This implementation committee could consist of both Members of Parliament and Senators or a separate Senate committee could be struck.

Recognizing that most decisions affecting children are taken at the provincial or territorial levels, we thank the premiers of each province and their territorial counterparts for their support of the work of the Canadian Commission during the International Year of the Child. We urge them to continue this support by establishing the means for ensuring that the recommendations contained in the National Agenda for Action for Children receive due consideration by their governments. Therefore we recommend that:

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|------|---|--|
| 14.3 | responsibility centres be established by provincial and territorial governments where these do not already exist. | <u>Target Groups</u><br>provincial and territorial governments |
|------|---|--|

To establish a place for children and youth within the federal government, we recommend that:

- 14.4 the federal government establish a responsibility centre within the most appropriate federal structure to examine and initiate legislation and departmental policies affecting children. This centre should have a coordinator with deputy minister status and a policy link with Cabinet.

Target Groups  
federal government

In order to support the important role of non-governmental organizations, acting collectively or separately with respect to all levels of government, and to strengthen their capacity to innovate, to advocate, to evaluate and to criticize programs affecting the needs of children and youth in Canada, we recommend that:

- 14.5 a coalition committee of non-governmental organizations or an advocacy committee be established to continue the objectives of the Canadian Commission so that the spirit and intent of the Commission is maintained in the future.
- 14.5a the Canadian Council on Children and Youth act as a facilitator to develop such an on-going committee.

## APPENDIX 1: THE UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

### Preamble

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, re-affirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Whereas the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth,

Whereas the need for such special safeguards has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924, and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the statutes of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children,

Whereas mankind owes to the child the best it has to give,

Now therefore, the General Assembly proclaims this Declaration of the Rights of the Child to the end that he may have a happy childhood and enjoy for his own good and for the good of society the rights and freedoms herein set forth, and calls upon parents, upon men and women as individuals and upon voluntary organizations, local authorities and national governments to recognize these rights and strive for their observance by legislative and other measures progressively taken in accordance with the following principles:

### Principle 1

The child shall enjoy all the rights set forth in this Declaration. All children, without any exception whatsoever, shall be entitled to these rights, without distinction or discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status, whether of himself or of his family.

### Principle 2

The child shall enjoy special protection, and shall be given opportunities and facilities, by law and by other means, to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy and normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity. In the enactment of laws for this purpose the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration.

### Principle 3

The child shall be entitled from his birth to a name and a nationality.

#### **Principle 4**

The child shall enjoy the benefits of social security. He shall be entitled to grow and develop in health; to this end special care and protection shall be provided both to him and to his mother, including adequate pre-natal and post-natal care. The child shall have the right to adequate nutrition, housing, recreation and medical services.

#### **Principle 5**

The child who is physically, mentally or socially handicapped shall be given the special treatment, education and care required by his particular condition.

#### **Principle 6**

The child, for the full and harmonious development of his personality, needs love and understanding. He shall, wherever possible, grow up in the care and under the responsibility of his parents, and in any case in an atmosphere of affection and of moral and material security; a child of tender years shall not, save in exceptional circumstances, be separated from his mother. Society and the public authorities shall have the duty to extend particular care to children without a family and to those without adequate means of support. Payment of state and other assistance towards the maintenance of children of large families is desirable.

#### **Principle 7**

The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. He shall be given an education which will promote his general culture, and enable him on a basis of equal opportunity to develop his abilities, his individual judgment, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society.

The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his parents.

The child shall have full opportunity for play and recreation, which should be directed to the same purposes as education; society and the public authorities shall endeavour to promote the enjoyment of this right.

#### **Principle 8**

The child shall in all circumstances be among the first to receive protection and relief.

#### **Principle 9**

The child shall be protected against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation. He shall not be the subject of traffic, in any form.

The child shall not be admitted to employment before an appro-

prate minimum age; he shall in no case be caused or permitted to engage in any occupation or employment which would prejudice his health or education, or interfere with his physical, mental or moral development.

### **Principle 10**

The child shall be protected from practices which may foster racial, religious and any other form of discrimination. He shall be brought up in a spirit of understanding, tolerance, friendship among peoples, peace and universal brotherhood and in full consciousness that his energy and talents should be devoted to the service of his fellow men.

APPENDIX 2: THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE CANADIAN COMMISSION  
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE CHILD 1979

Chairperson: Judge Doris Ogilvie

**Committees**

Executive Committee

Judge Doris Ogilvie, Chairperson  
Polly Hill  
Peter Lea  
Pat MacKay  
Tom McDougall  
Landon Pearson  
Stewart Sutcliffe  
Phyllis Yaffe

Communications Committee

Landon Pearson, Chairperson  
Madeleine Gariépy-Dubuc  
Barry Fleming  
Betty Nickerson  
Ernie Steele

Finance Committee

Stewart Sutcliffe, Chairman  
Léo Duguay  
David Hahn  
John Lisowski  
Ian Lithgow  
Rick Ryan  
Eric Zavershnik

Project Funding Committee

Phyllis Yaffe, Chairperson  
Louise Geoffrion-Gosselin  
Hannah Polowy  
Doris Ronnenberg  
Mary Wilson

## MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

Name	Organization
BELL, Ruth	National Council of YMCAs of Canada
CAMPBELL, Norman G.	Government of New Brunswick
D'ARGENCOURT, Leah	Inuit Tapirisat of Canada
DENAULT, Dolorès	Coordonatrice Pédagogique
DORNSTAUDER, Frank METLEWSKY, Fred (alt.)	Government of Saskatchewan Government of Saskatchewan
DUGUAY, Léo BARKER, Bob (alt.) GOLD, Sylvia (alt.)	Canadian Teachers' Federation Canadian Teachers' Federation Canadian Teachers' Federation
FLEMING, Barry	Public Service Alliance of Canada
GARIEPY-DUBUC, Madeleine	Canadian Mental Health Association
GEOFFRION-GOSSELIN, Louise	Physician (Epidemiologist)
GOLDENBERG, Eva	National Council of Jewish Women
GRIFFITHS, Audrey	Government of Alberta
HAHN, David	UNICEF Canada
HAWLEY, Connie	Government of British Columbia, B.C. Council for the Family
HILL, Polly	Government of Canada, Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation
JAUNIAUX, Jean-Jacques	Canadian Labour Congress
JAVED, A. Hamid	National Union of Provincial Government Employees
LEA, Peter	Canadian Labour Congress
LITHGOW, Ian	Canadian 4-H Council
MACKLIN, G.A.	Gowling & Henderson, Barristers
MACKAY, Pat	Canadian Council on Children and Youth
MCARDLE, Laurence	Canadian Petroleum Association

Name	Organization
MCDOUGALL, Tom	Perley-Robertson Panet Hill & McDougall
MCKINNON, Jane	Government of Ontario, Secretariat for Social Development
MICHAUD, Claude	Catholic Conference of Bishops
MERCIER, Lucille	
MONETTE, Pierre	Radio-Canada
NICKERSON, Betty	All About Us/Nous Autres Inc.
OGILVIE, Judge Doris	
PEARSON, Landon	Canadian Council of Churches
PEPPER, Sue	Government of the Yukon
POLOWY, Hannah	Canadian Association for Young Children
POST, Shirley	Canadian Institute of Child Health
RONNENBERG, Doris	Native Women's Association of Canada
RYAN, Rick	Boys' & Girls' Clubs of Canada
SCHALLER, Dr. John	Canadian Red Cross
SIMMS, Frank	Government of Newfoundland
STEELE, Ernie	Canadian Association of Broadcasters
SUTCLIFFE, Stewart	Clarkson & Gordon Co. Ltd.
SUTTON, Gerry	Government of P.E.I.
TOMLIN, Ron	Royal Bank of Canada
USHER, Trudy	Government of the Northwest Territories
WALKER, John A.	Government of Nova Scotia
WATTS, Dr. Norman	Canadian Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
WILSON, Mary	Government of Manitoba
YAFFE, Phyllis	The Children's Book Centre

The Commissioners listed below in the first column resigned during the course of the year and were replaced as indicated.

	Replaced by:	Replaced by:
DAWE, Mary Jo	LLOYD, Ann	PEPPER, Sue
ERHARDT, Marie	WILLIAMS, Bea	JAVED, Hamid
NELSON, Mona	HILL, Polly	
PROULX, Monique	MICHAUD, Claude	
ROY, Robert	MONETTE, Pierre	

## APPENDIX 3

## MINORITY REPORT: NATIVE CHILDREN

Submitted by Doris E. Ronnenberg

This minority report is made in the interest of intellectual integrity.

The final draft of the rationale and recommendations of the IYC Task Force on Native Children has been edited, and continues to be edited, for basic reasons of political expediency. As an active participant in the preparation of the Native section of the overall IYC final report, I feel that the Commission is unfortunately adopting a "be nice" attitude. Anything that is not "nice" is expunged from the report through editing, thus opening up the IYC Commission to the charge it was unwilling to face the real problem of Native children in Canada.

Though I feel many positive recommendations were made in the IYC Task Force Report on Native Children, I will not, and do not, agree with editing truth for expediency reasons.

Curiously, only the Task Force Report on Native Children was (clause by clause) voted upon by the full IYC Commission. Why? Perhaps it is because of the uncomfortable truth about the treatment of Native children by the Canadian people and government since Europeans first arrived here. Perhaps this treatment, a result of 400 years of government policy and superimposed "Christian" policy, has resulted in the present state of the Native child.

Early Canadian history regarded Native people as "pagans". This attitude towards Indian spirituality has not substantially changed today. One must note the combination of elected power and organized religious power which results in Canadian social policy and policy implementation. The result of such policy, and its implementation, is the crushing of Native identity and spirituality.

In the IYC Canadian Commission, the dominant culture and its values has been allowed to predominate. This cultural conditioning mitigates against stating facts that appear critical or "not nice". It is unfortunate that a more mature attitude does not exist. Our great and beautiful land should allow for many cultures to flourish, side by side. It should not be constantly subject to sterile arguments about French/English or Catholic/Protestant "correctness". Canadian reality, insofar as Native children are concerned, involve neither of these disputes.

An example of this expediency is the omission from the IYC Task Force on Native Children report, of the seventh rationale:

"Organized religion in Canada (brought to Native people by the Europeans from the time of their arrival in this country until the present) is characterized in its actual behavior towards Native people as:

- a. promoting assimilation through paternalism
- b. being preoccupied with cosmetic, well publicized, image serving attempts to "relate" to Native people.

Instead of the cloying paternalism of the pseudo-liberal towards Native people, we might see a real self-examination, with nothing "sacred"

excluded. This self-examination could include a look at how some organized religions actually acquired their Canadian property base from Native people, as well as a look the part of Natives in the citadels of the church power structures.

The rationale section of the IYC Task Force final report on Native Children (a. and b.) uses the words, "it is the opinion of many native people", instead of a more explicit statement of the fact, as in the original draft. This watering down of the report is unfortunate, and is another example of timid expediency prevailing.

In conclusion, about the entire final draft of the IYC Report of the Task Force on the Native Child, there is a feeling that, once again, "social justice" is being defined differently for Native children.

In the 1960s Prime Ministers Pearson and Trudeau spoke of a "just society" for Canada. Now in the 1980s this "just society" remains to be achieved for Native people. Perhaps if some place in Canadian history is sought in this 5-year term by the present Prime Minister, he might consider enshrining real principles of a just society for Natives and their children in social policies, particularly in a repatriated constitution.

Only by a quantum leap forward in thought and action will the real life problems of Native children in Canada be addressed. Such progress will not be easy. The enemies of true progress for Native people are politically strong and well financed. One can see this, for example, in the excessive care with which the IYC edited its final report on Native children, to avoid any harming of the sensitivities of corporate interests. Thus the inadequate hiring practices for Natives in Syncrude and Allsands heavy oil operations in Alberta was "edited away". The fact of a bitter deal for Natives remains and should be part of recommendation 6.9.

Only if there is the will to change, will change occur. This report is not made in a negative spirit. Rather out of disappointment that even in a Commission such as the IYC, the real life problems of Native children should be avoided, "watered down" or "edited". An adequate report on Native children would have to be much more comprehensive than the short IYC Task Force Report before its editing.

The Canadian Commission 1979 for the International Year of the Child could have spent the entire year on the needs of the Native child, if the intent was "social justice" within the context of Canada. All too often Canadians don't look to home for racial problems in their desire to appear to the world as reasonable brokers and peacemakers in other countries' disputes and at the United Nations. The maturing of the Canadian federation will be evidenced when all Canadians come to grips with the shameful way they actually treat Native children.

*Doris E. Ronnenberg*

Doris E. Ronnenberg

**APPENDIX 4: THE SECRETARIAT STAFF**

Executive Secretary: Tom Schatzky

Assistant Secretary: Diane Ponée

Project Funding: Michèle Charbonneau, Danielle Gallichand,  
Joan Heyland, Gisèle Maillet, Diane Marleau,  
Charlotte Michaud, Dominique Paris

Communications: Norah Froot, Denise LeGal, Carole Noël,  
Christine Proulx, Barbara Wolfe, Marilyn McCrea

Research: Susan Gilman, Suzing Hum, Mary Shenstone

Administrative Secretaries: Louise Beaudoin, Louise Oakes

Administrator: Bob Fredette

Official liaison with Health and Welfare Canada: Howard Clifford

## APPENDIX 5: BACKGROUND PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS

Background papers to National Agenda for Action items were prepared by the Canadian Commission for International Year of the Child and are available in English and French at minimal cost from the Canadian Council on Children and Youth, 323 Chapel Street, Ottawa, Ontario.

Each of these papers contains a brief overview of the area of concern in its Canadian context and an extensive bibliography of Canadian references.

The family	prepared by Suzing Hum
Children and culture	" " " " " "
Nature and the environment	" " " " " "
Play and recreation	" " " " " "
Television and the media	" " " " " "
Children and the law	prepared by Susan Gilman
The native child	" " " " " "
Children and health	prepared by Mary Shenstone and Landon Pearson

Discussion papers are also available on:

Economic issues as they affect children	prepared by Dr. John Moore
The spiritual rights of the child	prepared by John Bradford for the U.K. IYC Committee

Also available from the Canadian Council on Children and Youth are the following documents prepared by the Canadian Commission.

The Administrative Report of the Canadian Commission

The Needs Analysis, prepared by Susan Gilman. An in-depth case study analysis of the needs of Canadian children based on the 4000 applications received by the Canadian Commission's Project Funding Committee.

The Statistical Analysis of the Project Funding Program, prepared by Joan Heyland.

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