8th Annual CRAN Meeting
January 27th – 28th 2017
Responses to Shaking the Movers X

Prepared by Daniella Bendo
Overview

Shaking the Movers

In 2017 and early 2018, the Landon Pearson Resource Centre carried out four workshops across Canada in both official languages (English and French). Workshops were held in Toronto, Ontario; Fredericton, New Brunswick; Montreal, Quebec, and Vancouver, British Columbia. Workshops were held in partnership with the School of Child and Youth Care at Ryerson University in Ontario; the Provincial Advocate’s Office for Children and Youth in New Brunswick; Concordia University in Quebec, and The Centre for Restorative Justice at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia.

With a focus on the rights of children and the environment, each of the sites explored the UNCRC with a focus on Articles 3, 12, 13, 6, 24, 27, 28, 29 and 30.

Although each site focused on children’s rights and the environment, the reports yielded similar and distinct findings. Different venues raised some activism opportunities for participants such as youth involvement with the David Suzuki Foundation to foster change towards a world free of environmental harms.

All of the reports can be accessed on the Landon Pearson Centre website through the following hyperlink: [www.carleton.ca/landonpearsoncentre](http://www.carleton.ca/landonpearsoncentre)

The Public Health Agency, the Landon Pearson Centre, Ryerson University and in-kind support from the other sites supported the workshops. We would like to thank the funders and like to express appreciation to all of the organizers.

Shaking the Movers Organizers

**Toronto, Ontario:** Judy Finlay and Tara Rose-Farrell (Ryerson University)

**Fredericton, New Brunswick:** Sarah Dennene and Christian Whalen (Office of the Child and Youth Advocate)

**Vancouver, British Columbia:** Brenda Morrison (Simon Fraser), Laura Wright (Right to Play), Angie Mapara (The United Way)

**Montreal, Quebec:** Natasha Blanchet-Cohen (Concordia University)
On Jan 27-28th 2017, members of the Child Rights Academic Network (CRAN) met in Ottawa, Canada to discuss and respond to recommendations from the workshops with the respect to children’s rights and the environment. CRAN was developed by the Landon Pearson Resource Centre at Carleton University and is Canada’s first network of academics involved in teaching, researching and advocating with and for children’s rights. CRAN has been generously supported by the Muttart Foundation and has had regular presence from Muttart funders. This year, CRAN has continued to welcome additional members. CRAN members who also belong to various sub-committees within the network met prior to the CRAN conference to discuss ‘next steps’ in the following areas:

- Advocacy
- Networking and collaboration
- Research
- Funding

The conference began with Shaking the Movers presentations followed by an introduction of the topic and a round-table networking event:

**Setting the Context – Children’s Rights and Climate Change:** Christian Whalen

*Round table discussions regarding children’s rights and climate change*

**Christian Whalen** - "Monitoring and Measuring Child Rights Implementation in Canada."

**Joan Durrant** - "What work are you currently doing in the area of children's rights?"

**Kathy Vandergrift** - "Preparing for the next review of children's rights in Canada: Data, youth voice and public engagement."

**Virginia Caputo** – “Children’s right to play: research possibilities.”

**Angie Mapara** - “Changing the discourse from wants and needs to rights.”

Reports summarizing the outcomes of Shaking the Movers X were distributed in advance to CRAN participants who in turn, prepared responses to the youth participants. CRAN members responded specifically to the following guiding question:

Children’s rights and climate change is the theme of this year’s CRAN conference. From your experience with the young people with whom you interact in your work as well as
the concerns and perspectives expressed by Shaking the Movers participants in the Shaking the Movers Ryerson and East Coast 2016 reports, please briefly comment on what you find compelling about the ways they see the issues of water, healthy surroundings and wildlife?

The second day of the conference consisted of panel presentations and discussions based on the following themes: healthy environments: children’s rights and climate change; the relational impact of climate change: human and non-human interactions and the impact of climate change and children’s rights to security. Each presenter was asked to speak for five minutes so that everyone had a chance to be heard. Following the presentations, there was an opportunity for considerable discussion. Participants provided additional insights to the presentations, insights which will continue to enrich their research and teaching. Each panel was facilitated by a CRAN member who offered additional insights and coherently summarized panel discussions relevant to each theme.

The report that follows is a compilation of the CRAN participants’ responses to the STM X themes. Their writing demonstrates that youth have been ‘heard’ and their perspectives will be integrated into current academic debate.
Climate change may well be the greatest threat to children’s rights that currently exists. The rising incidence of floods and droughts, blizzards and storms that menace the lives and livelihoods of billions of people, especially in Africa and Asia, falls particularly heavily on children. When their parents are driven off the land by crop failure their children lose both the security of home and the security of food. When families migrate to the slums of the exploding megacities of the world children encounter new dangers. When water becomes scarce and armed groups begin to fight over it conflicts multiply and children flee for refuge. Rising sea-levels overwhelm the lowlands where they sometimes settle and they have to move again. Diseases flourish where infrastructures are weak and health declines. The well-off manage better, no matter where they live, so inequities spread. As our planet warms up around us the rights of children, and not just the very poor, are increasingly at stake and so is the very future of humankind. To extract us from the looming disaster we have brought upon ourselves we badly need the energy and creativity of children and youth and to channel that energy we first of all need to hear what they have to say.

This is why we brought together young people in Moncton, Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal to discuss climate change through a child rights lens and bring us their ideas about what should be done. When the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was being negotiated and then adopted by the General Assembly over 25 years ago global warming was only beginning to be taken seriously. As a result the Convention does not specifically address children’s environmental rights but it is quite clear that all the rights it does set out are impacted by what is now happening. Article 6, the right to survival and development is obvious. So is Art. 24, the right to health “taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution”. Art. 27, the right to an adequate standard of living, is clearly being violated every day. So does the right to education in a safe setting called for in Art.28 and Art. 29 addressing the aims of education, include “the development of respect for the natural environment.”

The four Shaking the Movers workshops that CRAN members, whose presentations are captured in this report, focused on the three themes; water, healthy surroundings and wildlife the youth chose to address. While there are many other topics that could have been chosen from among all the environmental issues that confront us and them, in the end, they are all interconnected and talking about one of them led inevitably to discussions about the others. What we found striking is that all the young participants arrived at the Shaking the Movers gatherings relatively unaware of their rights or, indeed, of the seriousness of the problems raised for their generation around the world. However, the more they talked, the more passionate they became and the more ideas they had and, in the end, they left transformed into environmental activists. The members of CRAN who attended our January meeting were clearly moved by what the children and young people had to say and they hope that the youth will read the responses we have included in this report and so understand that they have actually been heard and that their ideas will spread out through a broad network of “mover” who might make a difference.
PARTICIPANT RESPONSES
Healthy Environments: Children’s Rights and Climate Change

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CLIMATE CHANGE, CHILDREN’S RIGHTS & CHILDREN’S HEALTH

Dr. Sue Bennett
Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario
University of Ottawa

My brief reflections are in response to the young people’s voices from Shaking the Movers Toronto & East Coast. The young people gave a clear rationale as to why they should be part of the discussion on climate change and why their opinions count:

“People have to understand the world is ours. The current & future environment is at stake which is why children need to be heard”.

“Decisions that people in power take will not have an effect right away but it will have an effect on us, when we are adults, and I think it important to have our opinions and ideas heard.

“We will inherit the world. Every aspect of life is connected to the environment”
“We are all wildlife & a threat of mass extinction is a threat to us all – and not just for us but for those to come”

According to NASA, 2016 was the hottest year on record, setting a new high for the 3rd year in a row - 0.12 degrees Celsius higher than 2015 and 0.13 degrees Celsius higher from 2014-15. This streak of consecutive hot years is unprecedented since measurements began in 1880. Global temperature wasn’t the only record setter in 2016. Global warming causes climate change and North America saw its highest number of storms and floods in over four decades. Globally, we saw over 1.5 times more extreme weather catastrophes in 2016 than the average over the past 30 years. Global sea ice cover plunged to a record low as well. The list of climate consequences goes on.

There is 97% consensus amongst climate experts on the human cause of global warming. Several studies have shown that people who are aware of scientific consensus on human-caused global warming are more likely to support government action to curb greenhouse gas emissions.
People will generally defer to the judgement of experts and they trust climate scientists on the subject of global warming. However vested interests have long realized this and strenuous lobbying efforts by industry and others to undermine the science behind climate change contributes to confusion which undermines efforts to act on climate change. This campaign has been successful. A 2012 poll from US Pew Research found less than half of Americans thought scientists agreed humans were causing global warming and therefore there is not nearly enough public support or motivation to solve the problem. Clearly education is key and as one young person stated:

“They need to talk more about the environment and climate change in education so young people would understand what is happening and act”.

And that goes for all of us.

In response, I am going to highlight two scientific resources on the impact of climate change on child health that can be used for awareness raising and in educational settings. The 2015 Lancet Commission on Health & Climate Change (Ref 1) states rather optimistically that tackling climate change could be the greatest global opportunity of the 21st century & they are promoting a new science of Planetary health which is defined as the health of human civilization and the natural systems on which it depends. We know that humanity is the key driving force of global environmental change and that the risks lie within ourselves and the societies we have created in governance institutions and decision making. The threats are not outside but within us. This is a new attitude towards life and philosophy of living and we on this planet are all in this together.

The second major scientific resource on climate change and child health is the 2016 Technical & Policy Statements in Pediatrics, the Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Ref 2 & 3). Children are uniquely vulnerable to climate change because of their immaturity, unique behavior and dependence on caregivers (Ref 4). It is estimated that 88% of the existing burden of disease attributed to climate change is occurring in children less than 5 years and children in the world’s poorest countries are most affected. The papers describe the potential effects of global climate change on child health with calls to action for 1. Mitigation i.e. prevention of climate change in the first place by decreased reliance on fossil fuels (e.g. coal, oil & gas) and increased use of renewable energy (e.g. wind and solar) and 2. Adaptation by increasing public health preparedness, disease surveillance, research, improved access to education and early warning systems and health care.

The Paris Agreement Climate Change Accord came into force November 4th, 2016. All governments have ratified the Agreement and are now carrying an obligation to hold global warming to no more than 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels in what scientists regard as the limit of safety before climate change is likely to become catastrophic and irreversible.
This is a human rights issue for children. As one young person stated:

“This is about a fundamental right to Justice for children’s participation in a matter as essential as the condition of the planet on which they will come to raise their own children”

References


Response to Shaking the Movers on the topic of Climate Change

Dr. Stefania Maggi  
Department of Psychology  
Carleton University

In reading the STM reports I was impressed with the passion that youth expressed in response to the issue of climate change. The participants demonstrated a deep understanding of how this problem is affecting all of us. Their knowledge on their topic was varied, complex and multifaceted.

When talking about actions towards climate change, we typically group them into two sometimes overlapping categories: mitigation and adaptation. In mitigation, we refer to actions that we may take to reduce the potential impact of climate change on humans, animals and plants. This might include the development of renewable and clean energy, the preservation of forests, protection from fires, the creation of more effective waste management and compost technologies, and awareness campaigns and education about climate change. In their recommendations, youth focused primarily on actions that would fall under the category of mitigation.

The limited recommendations that youth identified pertaining to the adaptation to climate change is a reminder of how much more prevalent is the discourse of climate change as an environmental issue and not so much as a social and psychological phenomenon. Adaptation to climate change requires the recognition that some groups are affected more dramatically than others and that policies, programs and services should be developed to support anyone who is impacted by the effects of climate change, be it surviving a natural disaster or having to migrate to another region where there’s more adequate resources.

What is needed in educational programs is to extend the scope of education on climate change to incorporate more effectively the social and psychological underpinnings of this phenomenon. Something that appeared throughout the reports, as well, is the focus on governments as the recipients of the message that young people articulated in their participation. This is of course a by-product of the STM event where the intent is exactly that: to address the ‘movers’ i.e., people in positions to make decisions.

However, I would like to think that young people are ‘movers’ themselves and I would like to give them this message in closing of my address:

“The being respectful of the environment, conserving and recycling resources in your day to day life is important and necessary. However, this strategy alone will not help win the fight against climate change.

To win the fight against climate change we need massive action from all sorts of sectors. We need whole generations of people whose purpose in life in to mitigate the impacts of climate...
change and to help humans, animals and plants *adapt to the challenges that climate change brings*. Ultimately we need to restore the long-term health of our planet and it requires all the effort that we can give.

You have a role to play in this ambitious goal. One that goes beyond your day to day individual contribution and respect for the environment.

You can dedicate your whole life to the fight of climate change regardless of what career path you chose or what discipline you decide to study. *You can be a knight in the battle against climate change whether you are an artist, a carpenter, a fashion designer, an engineer or a teacher.*

Climate change touches every single aspect of our lives. You don’t have to choose between fighting climate change over following your career aspirations. You can do both because virtually every profession you will embark on will have the potential to help in the mitigation or adaptation to climate change.

All you need is to be aware and knowledgeable about how your job can make a difference in the fight against climate change and never miss an opportunity to make your contribution to one of the greatest challenges humanity has ever faced.
“When Cows Fart”: Securing the environment and a climate-resilient future for the world’s children

Lisa Wolff
UNICEF Canada

“When cows fart, they produce methane, which is toxic for the environment”
Youth participant, Shaking the Movers X

Children and young people are disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation and isolation. They are on the front lines. Many of the countries that are highly vulnerable to climate change are also the ones that have the highest number of children as a share of their overall population. Climate change represents a fundamental threat to their rights. The impacts are particularly evident and acute in low-income countries, but present numerous challenges to child development, health and broader well-being across the globe.

Impacts in low-income countries include increased malnutrition through changing agricultural yields and greater risk of disease and death through changes in water availability and the higher frequency of extreme weather events. Changing ecosystems affect people and the other living things we are connected to. Loss of family livelihoods, migration and family separation following climate related disasters and changing weather patterns can also leave children exposed to the dangers of exploitation, violence and abuse.

Some of these children arrive in Canada as refugees and immigrants; their experiences with climate change and environmental destruction are diverse and their rights must be considered in this context and protected in Canada through immigration and refugee law and policy. The Shaking the Movers young people recognized that a driver of the Syrian refugee crisis is climate change. For Canada’s children, climate change and poor environmental stewardship also show up in their enjoyment of their rights and well-being, in different ways related to where they live, their developmental stage, the extent to which their agency and participation are respected and their socioeconomic circumstances.

The most urgent task ahead is for action to halt the advance of climate change by curbing emissions and prioritizing clean, sustainable energy sources. At the same time we must protect ecosystems and children’s access to and life within them. We must act now to adapt to current and future climate shocks and to ensure resilience to future challenges. Investments in adaptation and mitigation will provide a more sustainable, safer and cleaner future for current and future generations.
At the Conference of Parties 21 (COP21) the global community signed up to the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which entered into force November 2016. The Paris Agreement includes commitments on curbing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions so that average global temperature increases are limited to no more than 2°C over pre-industrial levels (ideally below 1.5°C) and promoting climate-resilient sustainable development. Determined action to cut greenhouse gases will benefit the lives of hundreds of millions of children. UNICEF Canada is greatly encouraged that the Government of Canada has prioritized tackling climate change, has ratified the Paris Agreement, has committed to a low-carbon development strategy for 2050, and is taking a bold and whole-of-government approach to this multi-faceted issue. We are further encouraged by the recognition from the Minister of International Development and La Francophonie that young people are especially vulnerable to the destabilizing impact of climate change. Canada worked in the Paris negotiations to ensure that strong language on human rights, including a specific reference to children’s rights, was included in the outcome agreement.

In contrast, it is discouraging that the energy policy ushered in by the Government of Ontario has come with a discourse that largely ignores the rights of and impacts on children and future generations. If this and other policies were developed with Child Rights Impact Assessment, it might help to create a more positive dialogue around the cost-benefit framework for our children and youth and to better protect those who might disproportionately bear the costs. The Shaking the Movers youth readily understood the cost-benefit implications of the government’s efforts to reduce reliance on coal for energy. As one participant astutely pointed out:

“When cows fart, they produce methane, which is toxic for the environment. In some countries they fine farmers for owning cows because of the methane they release.”

A Child Rights Impact Assessment of policies and programs could include a specific lens for children to ensure that risks, costs and benefits for children are visible and adequately addressed. If difficult policy is ultimately good for children, will that shift the discourse?

The Shaking the Movers youth recognized that the most marginalized and vulnerable children will find their situation exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and the retreat of access to a healthy, natural environment. Fewer social and financial resources mean that families have a more difficult time accessing healthy spaces and coping with climate change shocks to food, water, energy, housing, insurance and other costs. Adaptation responses must be delivered in an equitable way with a focus on the most vulnerable, even if they are the hardest to reach. When Bosnia-Herzegovina was introducing electricity price increases, they conducted a Child Rights Impact Assessment with support from UNICEF which identified mitigating measures

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1. FCCC/CP/2015/L.9/Rev.1, [https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/l09r01.pdf](https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/l09r01.pdf)
such as a sensitive tariff scheme, lowering rates for the most disadvantaged families and at times when schoolchildren would be outside in the dark or doing homework.

If the best interests of children are a dim light in public discourse, the concept of intergenerational justice is also limited but is key to the protection of children’s rights in the context of climate change and environmental stewardship. In essence, the principle states that there should be distributive justice between generations and that the rights of different generations should be equal over time.\(^3\) The Shaking the Movers youth recognized this principle, saying “we will inherit the earth”. The concept has been underdeveloped in national law, though it has been the basis of litigation in the Philippines, used to allow class actions for the enforcement of benefits to future generations.\(^4\) The establishment of the principle at the national level would provide a legal basis to challenge laws and policies that do not take account of the rights of future generations\(^1\).

Never before has it been as urgent for all sectors to come together to address the challenges of addressing climate change and promoting sustainable development and low-carbon growth. Private sector partners play a key role through their investments, innovation and technology, mitigation efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and the delivery of climate adaptation infrastructure and sustainable energy solutions. UNICEF has collaborated closely with both governments and companies to develop and implement approaches that integrate children’s considerations\(^5\) into stakeholder engagement, impact assessment, and sector-specific responses to issues such as environmental sustainability and land use. UNICEF has developed a suite of key tools such as guidance on incorporating Children’s Rights Impact Assessments\(^\text{ii}\) and Engaging Stakeholders on Children’s Rights,\(^\text{iii}\) as well as the Children’s Rights and Business Principles\(^\text{iv}\) developed by UNICEF, the UN Global Compact, and Save the Children\(^\text{v}\). These practical resources offer guidance on what private and public actors can do to ensure that children’s rights are properly supported and respected and their environments protected through responsible business decision-making and operation. But as the Shaking the Movers youth noted, “there should be regulations to keep up with corporations” as well.

The Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) herald a new era in sustainable development. If implemented, this framework for action will go a long way in protecting children who are the least responsible for climate change, but who will suffer the most from its effects. It seeks to integrate and promote environmental, social and economic resilience, and bring together partners from across the private and public spheres. Addressing climate change is central to the

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realization of this integrated agenda. It connects the pursuit of human rights, including children’s rights, with a sustainability mission.

Children should benefit most from the resources and momentum around the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. Long-term climate finance is an essential investment for the world’s children. Substantial amounts of public and private finance are being invested in climate change adaptation, climate change mitigation, environmental sustainability and low-carbon development. Canada is at the forefront of innovative development financing efforts, as well as ways to finance global climate action, including through participation in the international Green Climate Fund, the global platform for investments in low-emission and climate-resilient development, research and development focused initiatives such as Mission Innovation, and a federal agenda for commercial and social innovation. Young people are inherently innovative. However, while children’s rights and well-being are affected by climate change and environmental degradation, they are often not recognized as actors in creating solutions.

We hope the Prime Minister’s Youth Council will take on a role in this work and help engage young people across the country, including indigenous young people who are acutely affected in ways readily identified by the Shaking the Movers youth. The Council working with other young Canadians might lead an initiative to create education, training and youth employment in a “climate sector”. This might help address other rights and well-being concerns in Canada, including the erosion of life satisfaction and mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health among young people. Some of reasons for this are the disconnection from natural spaces and healthy ecosystems – part of a broader trend of disconnection. The Internet of Things might reconnect young people in new ways but it cannot stand in for the healthy connectivity of children with natural ecosystems and the intentional connection of young people in opportunities to participate in society and economy.

Children and youth can be more active and exercise their rights in the political space. As the Shaking the Movers youth realized, “it is up to us”, “I think we are in charge”, “all children have the right to participate”. Children’s rights to political expression are key to ensuring effective participation in decision-making processes and climate action. Children are entitled to partake in the same forms of political expression as adults, including in political protest: the free expression guarantees under the Convention on the Rights of the Child mirror those under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which guarantee these rights to everyone. However, consequencing such participation with criminal sanctions is a growing possibility as indigenous rights and environmental protection include youth action. Voting is the a core means of engaging in the political system and States have begun to reduce ages to vote, Scotland, for example, allowed children to vote from the age of 16 in 2015. Though as yet no country has removed age barriers entirely and these more gradual measures are rare, the extension of voting rights to children would help ensure they are able to fully engage in politics on all issues, including in relation to climate change.
The Shaking the Movers young people recognized that the solutions will take a human ecosystem of governments, business, the UN and young people themselves. They readily identified the interconnections of climate with rights, and their international interdependence. For our part, UNICEF is committed to building a more sustainable future for children. UNICEF engages in policy advocacy and is advancing the use of Child Rights Impact Assessment so that children and youth input are prioritized in shaping policies including environmental sustainability and climate change. UNICEF is expanding the vital role of children and youth in creating environmental and climate solutions that can be transformed into concrete opportunities and action. UNICEF also works to mobilize the private sector to strengthen their environmental practices to improve the lives of children on the frontlines of climate change and environmental degradation through the Child Rights Business Principles initiative. UNICEF also is stepping up its efforts to address its environmental footprint and become carbon neutral, including investing in sustainable energy and resource efficient facilities and operations.

UNICEF Canada within our international Innovation Labs is launching an innovation agenda for children and youth, a collaborative platform to use design thinking to develop and test agile responses to challenges to rights and well-being. Young people can use the Design Studio to surface responses to environmental and climate problems in Canada. Simple interventions can make a big difference. For example, through ‘Project Lumiere,’ a micro-social enterprise scheme, UNICEF is introducing affordable and fast-charging LED lights into rural communities in Burundi. These LED lights provide a cleaner, safer and cheaper source of energy than kerosene lamps, decreasing emissions and protecting children from indoor air pollution and associated respiratory health issues. Since the launch of the project in 2013, participating communities report an 80 percent reduction in monthly household expenditure on energy for lighting. Women and youth generate an income from selling and charging the LED lights and also charging mobile phones. The Shaking the Movers youth had ready ideas that could be prototyped and tested in our lab, such as reducing the loss of food in transportation or labelling food packaging to report water usage like cigarette packaging.

- Clear the Air for Children [https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_92957.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_92957.html)
- UNICEF Child Rights and Business Principles [www.childrenandbusiness.org](http://www.childrenandbusiness.org)

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• Child Rights Impact Assessment Community of Practice
  www.criacommunityofpractice.org

• Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 16 (2013) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children’s rights, CRC/C/GC/16, 17 April 2013

• Climate Change and Environmental Education:

• Child-friendly Education: Transforming the lives of children affected by climate change:

• The benefits of a child-centred approach to climate change adaptation:

• Climate Change—Take Action Now! A guide to supporting the local actions of children and young people, with special emphasis on girls and young women:

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Theme: The Relational Impact of Climate Change: Human and Non-Human Interactions

We Are in Real Trouble Right Now: Child Rights and the Environment

Noah Keneally
PhD Candidate
University of Toronto
Ryerson University

Thank you, as always, Virginia and Landon and Daniella and all the other CRAN organizers, and fellow CRAN members.

We’re gathering this year to provide feedback regarding this year’s Shaking the Movers, and I have to say that this year’s topic of the environment and children’s rights is one that is close to my heart – so please forgive the emotional tone with which I am presenting.

When we face some of the real information about our global situation, it is extremely difficult to not fall into despair, as Joan alluded to yesterday. When we consider what options we have, and what kind of a world we have allowed to be created, it is very hard to find a positive perspective.

Connecting this to issues of children and childhood is not hard. Discussions of children/childhood are generally so future-focused, as are issues of the environment – and this future-focus was very much in evidence in some of the responses and remarks recorded in the STM reports:

“We are the future generations…”
“…this is the world we will have to live in…”
“…children are the future…”

As Angie mentioned earlier, these ideas of children as ‘becomings’ of the future or the beings of the present, in the language of the sociology of childhood, have become standards and even a little cliché, especially when we realize just how grave a situation we are at this very moment. WE ARE IN REAL TROUBLE RIGHT NOW – and some days, I have a terrible sense that the future is broken in a way that may have never been encountered before in humanity’s history. In the face of this bleak feeling, how do we continue this work of trying to make the world a better place for children? I think that some of what is emerging out of the STMs is helpful in answering this question.
The call for more education in all of the STMs – education regarding both children’s rights and environmental issues – is very clear. We have all witnessed, in the other years of STM and in other domains of our work, how galvanizing a force knowledge can be. Year after year, STM participants have said that they never knew about children’s rights, and how different they feel about their place in society and their responsibility for and ability to address some of the systemic issues of inequity facing children all over the world. Knowledge can be a powerful tool to guide action, and the youth participants seems to come away from the STM gatherings year after year with a renewed sense of purpose and focus.

The way that Chris was discussing the hierarchy of rights theory yesterday also made me think about a way through the thicket of trouble, confusion and despair. Breaking down rights into first, second and third generations of rights – first generation being the fundamental civil and political freedoms; second generation rights being the social, economic and cultural rights; and the third generation rights being the collective rights to clean environments, self-determination and identity – seems to obscure the facts that in order for us to have rights at all, we need to live in a survivable world. We need to shift from ideas of separateness – across age, nation, ethnicity etc, to a conceptual system that values the radical interdependence of all beings. I borrow this term from Buddhist scholar and environmental activist Joanna Macy, who has done incredible work for over four decades, and continues today to point out the ways that we rely on each other in a continuous embrace for our well-being in all domains on this planet – social, economic, physical, and environmental. The present environmental crisis can serve as a reminder that we not only all require clean air, water and soil to survive, but to survive and thrive in the societies that we have organized on this planet we require relationships of respect and recognition across all species, peoples, and ages.

As adults, scholars and professionals who work with children and on issues regarding children and childhood, I believe we have a crucial responsibility to emphasize these relationships – not only between adults and children and children and children, but between humans and all the other organisms we share this planet with. At this time in history we have to reinforce the idea that separateness is an illusion, that in actuality we need to be in rights relationships with all human and non-human life on the planet – that WE ARE NATURE.

We know that children – even very young children – are capable of grasping these ideas. The burning questions are: Do we have enough time to have these conversations, and are we brave enough to have them with children?
Response to “Shaking the Movers” 2017:

Children and Climate Change: they contributed less to its cause but they will suffer more from it.

Dr. Ziba Vaghri
University of Victoria

During the 2016 “Shaking the Movers” the youth had discussed the “climate change”. This short communication is my reaction to the statement made by a number of young people that they have the agency to exercise their rights, but need additional support from the adults to do so and to participate in resolving the climate change.

Why are we failing to provide enabling environments for our children and youth in order for them to participate in decision-making on climate change, an issue that will affect their lives more while their contribution to the situation has indeed been less?

Due to the misuse and abuse of the planet, we have brought upon ourselves, and our children, a horrendous situation for which generations to come will suffer more. Our children and future generations, who have hardly contributed to the negative progression of climate change, will endure much of its burden, yet we obliviously keep them out of the solution plans. There is an urgent need for the meaningful participation of children in decisions related to climate change. This inclusion of all affected parties and involving children in the solution plans has been clearly articulated by the Office of the High Commission for Human Rights as “intergenerational climate justice”

We have now arrived at a point where life on Earth is threatened in quality, quantity, and diversity as a result of the disturbances in the ecological determinants of health, such as water, air, resources, climate, contaminants and other elements. We have come to recognize that a problem of this caliber requires the global community to come together, however, for a long time, we have kept the issues of climate change in isolation. We must now ask ourselves: How will the impacts of climate change affect different members and vulnerable members of the mankind species, in particular, children? How will this play out for the childhood segment of the human life course?

Childhood is the critical yet vulnerable stage of human development in general, however, this vulnerability increases with climate change. The reasons for this are multiple and include the following: delayed physical, mental, psychological and spiritual development due to environmental stressors; higher risk for exposure to environmental contaminants due to their

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1 Key messages on human rights and climate change. Available at: http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ClimateChange/KeyMessages_on_HR_CC.pdf
innate curiosity; increased vulnerability to extreme weather events (e.g. floods, storms)\(^3\) due to their small and relatively weak physiques; increased risk of climate-sensitive diseases that are major contributors to under-five mortality\(^4\) (e.g. acute respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases, malaria and other vector-borne diseases); increased risk for malnutrition due to impacts of climate change on crop and food production (e.g. crop failures, food-borne diseases).

To add to the severity of the situation, there are concurrent factors that exacerbate the negative impacts of climate change on children. The world’s least developed countries will most likely bear most of the burden of climate change. These countries not only encompass a large percentage of the world’s population, but they also lack mechanisms to face and cope with devastating climatic events. It has been estimated that 46 countries, with a total population of 2.7 billion people, may be at higher risk of violent conflict and civil unrest as climate change transects with social, economic, and political realities of these countries\(^5\). This will further impact children through a psychosocial trauma, a threat of being recruited into armed forces, and forced displacement and migration, all of which may result in separation from their families. Furthermore, in the absence of adult protection, children separated from their families become easy targets for exploitation, sexual abuse, and trafficking\(^6\). Lastly, the world population is undergoing a sharp demographic shift. It has been estimated that by 2025, 146 million (almost one quarter) of the world’s under-five citizens (compared to 126 million in 2010)\(^7\) will live in the 49 Least Developed Countries of the world. These countries, that are already struggling to meet the needs of their citizens. These countries will undergo harsher climate changes and these dire conditions will exacerbate the lives of their youngest citizens\(^8\).

In 1992, the United Nations held the first Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and resulting from this conference was the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which was opened for the signature of the states. The UNFCCC contains no mention of children, even though it calls for preserving the global climate for present and future generations\(^3\). Additionally, the UNFCCC guidelines for National Communications (the document based on which all the signatories to UNFCCC report on the processes put in place to implement the terms of the Convention) have no reference to report developments which affect children disproportionately\(^8\).

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\(^4\) Climate change and child rights. UNICEF. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/sowc/pdfs/panels/Climate%20change%20and%20child%20rights.pdf

\(^5\) Smith, Dan, and Janani Vivekananda, A Climate of Conflict: The links between climate change, peace and war, International Alert, London, November 2007, p. 3


In 2008, after over a decade since the inception of the UNFCCC, the UN Joint Framework Initiative on Children, Youth and Climate Change was developed. Despite the fact that one of the two central reasons for establishing this entity is to empower children and young people to take action on climate change, children and young people have consistently failed to influence the Conference of Parties (COP)\(^9\). At the 2013 COP, youth delegates organized three side events to highlight children’s vulnerability, but more importantly to draw attention to their agency in effectively adapting to climate change. Nevertheless, none of these efforts or the core ideas were reflected in the final declarations of the COP in Warsaw COP\(^10\). The trend has not been much different for Paris COP\(^11\) in 2015, or Marrakech COP\(^12\) in 2016 and the final declarations do not mention children despite the fact that they are the main victims of climate change.

Children’s opinions and concerns, despite the physical presence of children and youth in the global gatherings, remain absent in the formal agreements and declarations and outcomes of the UNFCCC. This warrants a great deal of concern. The CRC authoritatively declares rights to participation and to be heard through many articles. This is not only about the right of children to participate in their psychological, social, emotional and cognitive development, but also because, unlike the common myth, children have a great deal to contribute.

“Climate justice”, in addition to its geographic dimension, must have a dimension of going across generations, intergenerational equity demands the inclusion of those yet to come who will be greatly affected by climate change. Children who have been born and are here today are to be included as this is their fundamental human right. They also need to be included as the representatives of those who are to be born in the future, that is, those who did not contribute much to climate change but will pay more for its consequences.

While climate change threatens, many rights articulated in the CRC, such as the right to survival and development that also in a very discriminatory fashion, the way the global authorities are responding to climate change violates further rights of children and youth. To name a few, the rights to: be heard (art. 12.2, CRC), participation (art. 12.1, CRC), and freedom of expression (art. 13, CRC). Exclusion of children and/or tokenistic inclusion of children in the global conversations undermine accountability to children and the rule of law. The CRC is the most highly universally ratified human rights treaty in the history and holds a great deal of political will and power. We must leverage this political will to advance “intergenerational climate justice”\(^3\).

In conclusion, the evidence is clear: climate change will have undeniable negative impacts on the children and youth of today and for generations to come, but by taking action today we may be able to ameliorate some of the challenges that are to come. One of those actions, in particular, is to ensure children and youth’s voices, ideas, and opinions are heard and

\(^9\)Conference of Parties is the conference of the governing body of the UNFCCC comprised of all states parties who have ratified the UNFCCC
\(^10\)See Youth Portal COP 19 for discussion of UN Joint Framework Initiative on Children, Youth and Climate Change, and various activities of UN agencies. Available at http://unfccc.int/cc_inet/cc_inet/youth_portal/items/6519.php
\(^12\)Outcome of Marrakech COP. Available at: https://www.c2es.org/docUploads/cop-22-marrakech-summary.pdf
elevated. Children and youth have the right to be heard, and this right should be fulfilled when
decisions are made about how to address climate change. Now, more than ever, we need to
advocate for these rights so we can collaboratively advance “intergenerational climate justice”6.
The Environment, Climate Change, Water, Wildlife & the UN CRC

Lindsey Li
Loran Scholarship Foundation

Initial Thoughts

Policies and practices that actively or inadvertently prohibit or limit access to resources such as water, to a clean and healthy environment, to a sustained and sustainable world, effectively create several classes of people. This is in direct contradiction to the stance all States Parties to the UN CRC took in “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” as being “the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (preamble).

Members of our human family who live in areas that are threatened or have been irreversibly altered by climate change do not genuinely hold and cannot truly exercise their rights to: survival and development; preservation of identity; health and health services; adequate standards of living; education; practice of culture, language and traditions for minority and indigenous children; or leisure, play and culture. In contrast, those who live in areas of the world not yet substantially affected (ostensibly) by these issues are less restricted in their exercise of said rights.

This effectively creates yet another class system (in addition to the economic, social, cultural and political ones with which we are familiar) in which whether someone has access to clean water and healthy sustained and sustainable environment fundamentally determines whether they can survive, attend school, pursue growth opportunities, find decent employment, provide adequate support for their children, and so on. In contrast, those who happen to have been born in (or are in a position of privilege such that they can move to) a place where the air is still clear and the water runs freely may face life struggles but they are of a fundamentally different nature due to the fact that their very survival (with exceptions) is not continuously at risk.

Despite the above, climate change affects all people - young and old, regardless of class - and the issue of climate change needs to be discussed in relation to rights, which are the rights of all people. In response to the Shaking the Movers discussions, below are a few thoughts about how children’s rights, specifically, are directly related to phenomena linked to climate change in ways that Shaking the Movers may not have directly discussed, and ways that may not seem so obvious.
Healthy Surroundings - Air Quality and Education

In December 2016 the principal of a school in Linzhou, China was suspended after he forced 400 students to sit outside on a field for an entire day to write previously scheduled exams while the school itself closed due to unbearable toxic smog. Time likened the toxic smog to an “airpocalypse”.i (This term is somewhat problematic as the use of apocalyptic imagery bestows the idea that ruin is inevitable and we are beyond the point of return. As a result, efforts to prevent further climate change may seem superfluous, which is the last thing about climate change that we need to believe.) In any case, this story showcases how many aspects of child rights are affected when smog is re-characterized in terms of the health of the surroundings that we inhabit.

This story also demonstrates how environmental factors like smog are not just a public health issue in the traditional sense of disease. Children’s right to education is profoundly affected when a school shuts down because the air is not breathable. Linzhou is not the only case of this happening - Tehran and New Delhi in the fall of 2016 and Rybnik, Poland in the winter of 2017 are just a few more examples of places where intolerably low air quality disrupts everything including access to education.

Climate Change Denial - A Matter of Survival and Successful Livelihoods

President Trump’s climate change denial affects people the world over - not just in the United States. His intention to cancel the Paris Climate Agreement signals a blatant disregard for global political will to address climate change seriously. The Environmental Protection Agency’s website has been purged of scientifically backed information about human-induced global warming.

In our relatively privileged political system, young people in America who want to work in climate-related policy for the benefit of society will likely now be alienated as citizens and political agents. More than that, any act on the part of any official governance apparatus that intentionally aims to suppress truth and information is damaging to the rights of children in terms of access to information (article 17), the right to and aims of education (articles 24 and 28), the right to participate (article 31) and the right to freedom of expression, including “the freedom to ask, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds” (article 13).

More fundamentally, climate change denial is denial of the fact that anthropogenic global warming is an indirect cause of suffering and death. For example, “climate change, disproportionately caused by carbon emissions from America, seems to be behind a severe drought that has led crops to wilt across seven countries in Southern Africa. The result is acute malnutrition for 1.3 million children in the region” (according to the United Nations) and starvation.ii
Articles 7 (re: registration, name, nationality, care) and 9 (re: separation from parents) are relevant here. Parents in places severely affected by global warming are leaving their children to find employment where there is water, adequate food and other resources. Children have a right to be cared for by their parents as much as is possible and yet many are now becoming “climate orphans” as a result of global warming.

If “developed” countries don’t think climate change will really affect us, maybe a cold economics argument can be of help: average income around the world will be 23% lower by the year 2100, inducing “widening global income equality”, as compared to if climate change was not a factor. This undermines the right of children in every country to grow up with every opportunity to pursue healthy, fulfilling, active lives of full participation in society.iii

Water - Availability, Access and Rights

Some of the salient issues related to water availability and use include water pollution, hygiene and sanitation, bottling, mining, fracking, and droughts leading to food crises, malnutrition and starvation. At the base of all these issues is access to water supplies.

A CBC article from Nov 2015 demonstrates that the rate of a resource’s renewal is of as much concern as the possibility of renewal itself.iv It cites a study that found less than 6% of groundwater is replenished within 50 years – and therefore it is effectively a non-renewable resource according to the studyv (the article was careful to emphasize that this is on the “scale of a human lifetime, rather than on a geological timescale” but that doesn’t really change the impact on humans in immediate need of water). Billions of people rely on aquifers and wells and, according to a hydro-geologist quoted in the CBC article, groundwater is “used by more than a third of the world's population (and a third of Canadians) every day for their drinking water and it's used by agriculture and industry”. All of this makes the fact that some areas have more groundwater than others even more distressing for equality of access, or any access at all.

The link to climate change is summarized as such: “[Groundwater] tends to be mainly found within a few hundred metres of the surface, where it is most vulnerable to being contaminated by pollution or depleted by higher temperatures and reduced rainfall as a result of climate change”.

Unwillingness to alleviate the conditions that make groundwater even more vulnerable directly undercuts States’ commitments to UN CRC articles 6 on the right to life, survival and development, 24 on standards of health and 27 on adequate standards of living. There are also harsh implications for people and young children with limited mobility (for example, not being able to travel a long distance to acquire water because the closer source dried up. Article 23, addressing children with disabilities, applies here too).
Special attention also needs to be paid to this urgent matter close to home: the Human Rights Watch states that the Canadian government “has violated a range of international human rights obligations toward First Nations persons and communities by failing to remedy the severe water crisis”.\textsuperscript{vi} First and foremost, this issue is a matter of discrimination (article 2). For example, the government regulates water off-reserve but does not have “binding regulations” on reserve – discriminatory because it means that First Nations are not equally protected under law (UN CRC article 4 and article 18(2)). Articles 14 regarding freedom of thought, conscience and religion and 30 regarding Indigenous children’s right to enjoy their own culture, are also of concern here: the same HRW report says “In February 2016, nine First Nations women from communities across Ontario traveled to Geneva to tell the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) that filthy water is making their families sick and undermining their spiritual relationship with water”.

**Wildlife - More than Cute Furry Animals**

Wildlife is often thought of as referring primarily to wild animals. However, when the term is understood to mean all undomesticated life including flora and microorganisms, a new perspective becomes available to us. The whole web of biological existence is continually renewed because the infrastructure created by all wildlife together is inherently regenerating, a process that is crucial for the survival and flourishing of all organisms.

Beyond human survival being dependent on the rich and varied ecosystems that we thrive on, wildlife make our everyday lives and functioning easier and richer. Access and exposure to nature are critical to physical and mental health and crucial for the “full and harmonious development of [children’s personalities]” (CRC preamble). Medicines and remedies often use materials gathered from the wild; otherwise, all of it would have to be synthesized from chemicals. Wildlife weaves together to create the beautiful landscapes and parks that we take for granted. Children learn and play and create (article 31) through interaction with these landscapes and with the various elements of nature. Respect for all life, domesticated and undomesticated, engenders respect for all human beings, reflecting the very spirit of the CRC itself.

Wildlife is a part of what is called “mother earth” and it represents so much more than a critical component for survival and cute animals. “Mother Earth provides us with our food and clean water sources. She bestows us with materials for our homes, clothes and tools. She provides all life with raw materials for our industry, ingenuity and progress. She is the basis of who we are as “real human beings” that include our languages, our cultures, our knowledge and wisdom to know how to conduct ourselves in a good way”\textsuperscript{vii}.


Shaking the Movers: Through a Religious Studies Perspective
Dr. Valerie Michaelson
Queens University

I read the Shaking the Movers reports through the lens of a religious studies scholar, and what struck me was the
tiniest hint of religion. The group from the East Coast noted the Freedom of Religion as a fundamental right. In Toronto, the reference was even more subtle. Participants were asked: “What can your schools, service providers, churches, community groups, family, do to support [climate justice]?” One young person’s comment struck me deeply:

“...In school they just teach you that the planet is going to die and that you should just turn off your lights but it's more.” I don’t suggest that I know what this young person was thinking in the words “it’s more” but I do want to suggest that one of the places we get language to talk about that “more” is through the world’s religions.

At a moment when the world seems to be spinning out of control, religion might feel irrelevant. However, faith communities around the globe are addressing climate change in powerful ways. The Dalai Lama asserts that it is “our collective and individual responsibility to preserve and tend to the environment in which we all live.” In the Islamic Declaration on Climate Change we read: “Excessive pollution from fossil fuels threatens to destroy the gifts bestowed on us by God, whom we know as Allah – gifts such as a functioning climate, healthy air to breathe, regular seasons, and living oceans.” A call is issued to Muslims around the world to participate in climate action. A group of Anglican Bishops writes that climate change problems are “spiritual as well as economic, scientific and political, because the roadblock to effective action relates to basic existential issues of how human life is framed and valued... For this reason the Church must urgently find its collective moral voice.” And in 2015, UNICEF and the World Council of Churches developed an exciting partnership with the goal of looking at violence and climate change, and the impact both have on the lives of children. The world’s religions offer us language to talk about the “something more.” There is, of course, a dark side to this story. In my own research, I untangle religion as both a resource and risk in the lives of children. I am afraid I spend most of my time talking about the risk; the layers of damage in the lives of too many children have religious roots. Our sacred traditions have been used to justify violence, extremism and the desecration of this earth, our home. But as Rabbi Sharon Brous believes, these same sacred stories also contain the “raw material justify compassion, coexistence and kindness -- that when others choose to read our texts as directives for hate and vengeance, we can choose to read those same texts as directives for love and for forgiveness.”
This weekend, we have been reminded of the urgency of hearing from children and youth about possible solutions to the crisis we are in. While we had a tiny glimpse of religion in the reports from both groups of Shaking the Movers, I wonder if the potential of that conversation was realized. Just based on Canadian statistics, I would expect at least 20% of participants to have some kind of religious commitment. Whatever that looks like in their lives, religion didn’t seem to hold more than a very passing relevance to this conversation. This tells me two things: first, that religions are failing young people by not giving them the rich spiritual vision from deep within their own traditions to create a more just, kind, equitable and sustainable world. But it also suggests to me that religion remains an uncomfortable topic of conversation. Even our children have learned that talk about religion stays in the temple, the mosque or the church.

My own qualitative work suggests a different story. Over and over again, I have seen that when we create safe spaces for young people to talk about how their own religious and spiritual commitments help them dream about the world they want to create and to live in, powerful and transformational ideas emerge. Religion can be a powerful resource to many young people as they navigate a very complicated world. A global, multi religious conversation is burgeoning around the globe; millions of people are casting their lot with religion, saying that it can and indeed must be a force for good in the world. This voice must be stronger than any religious voices that question the dignity of any group of people, that ignore scientific data and that build walls rather than communities. Of course, for all kinds of valid reasons, many will not want to be a part of a religious conversation. Reading the Shaking the Movers report left me thinking that for the children for whom religion is a personal, family or cultural value and who are interested, they deserve the chance to add their voices to this global conversation. They have the right to participate fully in this community who is working tirelessly against extremism, and committed to using religion for the good of all the world’s people, and for the earth herself.

The Reverend, Dr. Valerie Michaelson
Children’s rights and the environment: impact and role of the extractive industry

Dr. Mona Paré
University of Ottawa

The Shaking the Movers reports from 2016 demonstrate that youth are concerned about the environment, they are willing to take action, and they have concrete recommendations to improve the way we do things. They demonstrate great awareness of problems locally. However, they also pointed to problems happening elsewhere. For example, a youth in the Toronto report noted that desertification is a huge problem. “It can happen when large international industries go to poor countries and take the water from the land to use for their own needs and when the people of the country try to get the water the land is dry and there is no water left.”

The report from the East Coast Shaking the Movers identified more specifically the mining activities of Canadian firms as something that has a negative impact on the environment. The youth recognized that activities involving Canadian actions abroad are little respectful of the environment and of the rights of the local people: “… we learned how little respect Canadian mining companies show the environment in other counties. We want to be known as a country that values our planet and the environment in all countries, not just our own. Canada represents the largest driving force in the natural resource extraction and exploitation industry. Unfortunately, Canadian companies are not known for being responsible and respectful. (…) Failure to obey the laws [in the countries where they are located] leads to murders, violations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, natural disasters, etc.”

Indeed, more mining companies are domiciled in Canada than any other country, and Canadian companies, or their subsidiaries, have been known to be involved in various violations of human rights, including, but not limited to environmental rights. There are also potential violations, as companies don’t conduct full impact assessments with local communities. These are exemplified by many complaints filed by diverse civil society groups. For example, there was a complaint in 2010 against Ivanhoe Mines for its copper-gold-silver mine in Mongolia focusing on shortcomings of the project’s environmental impact assessment. There was great concern that mining would threaten access to the community’s drinking water and put the community’s livelihoods at risk because of environmental degradation and reduction of the availability of pasture land. More recently, in December 2016, following a petition by a number of civil

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1 Shaking the Movers X: Youth Rights and the Environment, p.11
2 East Coast Shaking the Movers: Environment and climate change through a child rights lens, 2016, p. 20
society organizations, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) – part of the World Bank group – decided to divest from Eco Oro Minerals’ mining project in Colombia. The mining project is in a protected ecosystem that provides water to millions of people, and the company had not properly considered its social and environmental impacts.⁴

These are just some of many examples that show that mining companies are not taking their responsibilities seriously and that their actions violate or are likely to violate children’s rights that relate to the environment. These include the right to health, to food, to housing, as well as the right to water. Water has been finally recognized as a human right in the last few years, encompassing water in sufficient quantity and quality for personal use (drinking, washing, cooking), and sanitation. The right to water is included in the right to health and in the right to an adequate standard of living. Thus, the right to a safe environment is related to many other human rights that are of particular importance to children.

While there is increasing awareness of violations caused by extractive industries abroad, and while national and international institutions are responding to these violations, children’s rights continue to be largely ignored. Problems related to children tend to be amalgamated with those of the community as a whole.⁵ While children’s interests may often coincide with those of the community, it is important to examine children’s rights separately for many reasons.⁶ First, children are disproportionately represented in countries where mining companies operate. Second, human rights violations can have lasting developmental effects on children. According to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, “exposure to […] unsafe products or environmental hazards may have lifelong, irreversible and even transgenerational consequences”.⁷ Third, children in developing countries are more vulnerable to physical, social, and emotional stressors than children in industrialized countries due to the effects of poverty. Environmental effects of mining activities can, for example, expose children to pollution and industrial hazards; they can lead to reduced access to safe drinking water, and loss of livelihoods, as they change traditional farming practices and reduce arable land.

Mining can thus have unique effects on children and it is important that children gain visibility in all action aimed at improving the practices of mining companies. We should not forget that actions of Canada and Canada-based companies have an impact on children worldwide. Children should be heard, and children’s rights should be fully included in discussions and action related to mining and its environmental effects.

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⁶ Ibid.
⁷ UNCRC, General Comment No. 16: State Obligations regarding the Impact of the Business Sector on Children’s Rights, UN Doc. CRC/C/GC/16 (2013), para. 4
Appendix II: Panel Participants

**Healthy Environment: Children’s Rights and Climate Change**

- Sue Bennett (CHEO/University of Ottawa)
- Stefania Maggi (Carleton University)
- Lisa Wolff (UNICEF)
- Monica Ruiz-Casares (McGill University)
- Joan Durrant (University of Manitoba)
- Laura Wright (Right to Play)
- Gerison Lansdown (International Child Rights Scholar)

**The Relational Impact of Climate Change: Human and Non-human Interactions**

- Micheal Montgomery (IICRD)
- Noah Kenneally (University of Toronto/Ryerson University)
- Valerie Michaelson (Queens University)
- Brenda LeFrancois (virtual participation – Memorial University of Newfoundland)
- Tara Collins (Ryerson University)
- Ziba Vaghri (University of Victoria)

**The Impact of Climate Change and Children’s Right to Security**

- Tom Waldock (Nipissing University)
- Samira Ahmed (Justice for Children and Youth)
- Andrea Khan (University of Ottawa)
- Kathy Vandergrift (Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children)
- Richard Mitchell (Brock University)
- Anne McGillivray (University of Manitoba)
- Mona Pare (University of Ottawa)