

Finding Our Pathway toward Childhoods Free From Violence: Recommendations for an Effective Pathway for Canada

Introduction

The Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children (CCRC), UNICEF, and PrevNet co-sponsored a consultation on Ending Violence Against Children in Canada, with the support of the Public Health Agency of Canada. For detailed information on the consultation, see the full report, *Finding Our Path toward Childhoods Free From Violence*. Below are CCRC recommendations for a more robust plan of action for Canada, based on the consultations.

- Add measurable objectives to the government *Road Map*, based on a broad analysis of available data and evidence of good practices that could be scaled-up to increase impact and demonstrate effectiveness.
- Develop an inventory of resources that can be shared and readily available across sectors and geographic locations. This initiative could start with updating existing federal government website information about violence against children to reflect the consensus of international research and practice. A shared on-line resource center, managed under the direction of a multi-sectoral group, could benefit all actors in different levels of government and civil society. This may build on existing initiatives such as the Canadian Best Practices Portal.
- Develop and implement an effective monitoring and reporting system for violence against children under federal leadership. The system should include annual reports and include, over time, geographic mapping of data about violence and access to programs, outcome data to show progress over time, and analysis of specific types of violence.
- To enhance partnerships, a focal point is needed to facilitate on-going co-ordination and collaboration between the various groups working on violence prevention. With a clear mandate and resources, the focal point could also facilitate on-line communication and occasional in-person gatherings to ensure on-going civil society input into the strategy.
- Over time and working with civil society, efforts should be made to turn what is now a federal government *Road Map* into a national plan of action that is designed to maximize



the collective impact of federal, provincial, municipal, territorial, and Indigenous initiatives within their various jurisdictions. A rights-based framework could assist in coordination because provinces are also duty-bearers under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Indigenous organizations endorse the Convention, and municipalities play a strong role and benefit from ending violence against children.

- To reach all children and their communities, an effective communications strategy requires strong, on-going message framing, based on Article 19 of the Convention, youth-friendly resources, and an easy-to use means for partners in violence prevention to communicate with each other. A pro-active, robust public health communications strategy is as important for ending violence as it is to encourage physical fitness for children or limit substance use.
- Incentivize sustainability of viable initiatives (not just pilot projects), recognizing that the federal government does not fund long-term projects.
- Advance a stronger legal framework that is clearly based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, preventing all forms of violence against children consistent with international norms and commitments.

For further information, please contact the CCRC at info@rightsofchildren.ca.