



CRC 2003 Review: Background Note 5 on the CRC and Basic Services¹

Children's Rights Can Improve Basic Services in Canada

In a 2003 review of Canada's progress on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Committee gave Canada several recommendations relating to health, education, child care, and other services for children. All Canadians have an interest in these recommendations because they would improve circumstances for children in all areas of the country, if they were implemented.

Health Care

The 2003 review noted that Canada's high standard of health care is not shared equally by all children across the country. The review called for "special attention to indigenous children and children in rural and remote areas." (Concluding Observations, paragraph 35.) The review emphasized the need for youth suicide prevention, calling for "additional support and prevention and intervention programs." (Concluding Observations, paragraph 37.)

Child Care

Canada's child care policy has changed, but the 2003 recommendation is still relevant:

"The Committee encourages the State party to undertake a comparative analysis at the provincial and territorial levels to identify variations in children's care provisions and their impact on children, and to devise a coordinated approach to ensure quality child care is available to all children, regardless of their economic or geographic status.

(Concluding Observations, paragraph 39.)

¹ This is fifth in a series of background notes on the 2003 Review of Canada's Second Report under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It accompanies an overview of the recommendations, entitled "Canada and the CRC: 2003 Review Report," prepared by the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children.



Education

The UN Committee asked Canada to take three significant actions to advance children's right to an education:

- Ensure that free primary quality education is available for all children, with particular attention to children in rural communities, Aboriginal children, refugees or asylum seekers, and children from disadvantaged groups;
- Ensure that children's rights are taught in school and, where needed, in other languages; and
- Adopt legislative measures to forbid the use of any form of corporal punishment in schools and encourage child participation in disciplinary measures

Actions before the next review

The Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children (CCRC) asks the federal government to implement or respond to the UN Committee's 2003 review recommendations before Canada's third report is due in 2009. At the same time, the government should make a concerted effort to inform Canadians about actions taken.