

Invited Speakers



The Middle Childhood Initiative is a project of the National Alliance for Children and Youth to explore issues affecting children ages 6-12 in Canada. Funded by the Social Development Community Partnerships Program of HRSDC, the Middle Childhood Initiative is a pan-Canadian effort involving participants from across the country to promote greater understanding of the complexity and inter-relatedness of issues affecting children aged 6 to 12 and their families through research, the development of policy briefs, community consultations, and developing a policy framework for Middle Childhood.



Janis Douglas, Chair of the Middle Childhood Initiative Working Group (and Manager, Capacity Development and Community Affairs, Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada) and **Larry Gemmel**, Executive Director of the National Alliance for Children and Youth, will set the stage for the Learning Summit by describing findings from our research and consultations and the proposed Policy Framework for Middle Childhood linking families, schools, and communities.

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Landon Pearson is a former Senator and Adviser on Children's Rights to the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. She is currently the Director of the Landon Pearson Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights at Carleton University. Throughout her career, she has dedicated her life to the health and well-being of children.

Former Senator Pearson will speak to the importance of a rights based approach to issues of Middle Childhood, including the importance of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as Canada's progress in setting goals for children and addressing the UN Millennium Goals.



Bob Yates, Yates, Thorn & Associates Consulting Services in Victoria, B.C. Trained as a professional planner in the United Kingdom, Mr. Yates has a strong background in both management and planning. Prior to developing his consulting business, he was a professional planner in two of the largest school districts in Vancouver and Victoria.

We have knowledge and success stories, but how do we move to action and help to create integrated policies at all levels of government to support school age children? Drawing on presentations and workshops at the Learning Summit, Mr. Yates will build on his experience in the Lower Mainland to suggest policy implications and propose how we can move forward collectively to create an "Agenda for Middle Childhood".



Arlene Perly-Rae has been actively involved in public life for many years, especially in areas pertaining to children such as storytelling, literacy and child poverty. She wrote a regular Children's Books column in the *Toronto Star* for eight years, as well as a number of freelance pieces for various publications including the *Globe and Mail*, *Quill and Quire*, *Indigo Online* and *Macleans*. Her award-winning book, *Everybody's Favourites* (Penguin, 1997), is a

guide to the best and most imaginative books available to young people today. She is currently working directly with an elementary school in Toronto to establish a lunchtime reading program. She is on the steering committee for the Campaign Against Child Poverty and serves as a board member of World Literacy of Canada and of McClelland and Stewart.

As a Champion for the Toronto Middle Childhood Matters Coalition, Ms. Perly-Rae will speak to the importance of Middle Childhood and the need for leadership from community-based coalitions.



Veronica Lacey is President & CEO of The Learning Partnership, a national not-for-profit organization developing partnerships that strengthen public education in Canada.

For the past thirty years, Veronica has been a major player in the Canadian and International educational

community. From her start in the classroom, through ever increasingly responsible roles of Principal, Superintendent, Director of Education and lastly Secretary Treasurer of the North York Board of Education, Ms. Lacey has been involved in leading edge innovative programs, major reform initiatives and community engagement both nationally and internationally, working in Europe, Asia and Latin America. She was a former Deputy Minister of Education and Training for the province of Ontario. Most recently, Veronica has been a Senior Fellow at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto in the area of Public Policy and International Studies.

Ms Lacey has served on numerous provincial and national boards including the National Information Highways Advisory Council, the Canadian Council on Learning and Women's College Hospital in Toronto. For her achievements in education, she has been granted an Honourary doctorate by Brock University and has also been widely recognized by the YWCA as a Woman of Distinction, and by the University of Toronto as a Distinguished Educator.

Ms. Lacey will speak to the demographic changes in Canada and their impact on the public education system.

Invited Speakers



Verda Petry is a member of the Health Council of Canada and former Chancellor for the University of Regina. Originally from Melfort, she enjoyed a teaching career that spanned over 42 years. She served with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and the Regina Public School Teachers' Association. Recipient of many awards, she continues to actively work with the Health Council and seniors' organizations in Saskatchewan.

Ms. Petry will provide an overview of "Their Future is Now: Healthy Choices for Canada's Children & Youth". The Health Council of Canada report from June 2006 highlights the inequalities that continue to threaten child and youth health, reinforces what we know about how to improve child health, and challenges governments and communities to put that knowledge into action. The first of nine National Health goals for Canada is to have "children reach their full potential, growing up happy, healthy, confident and secure" - Yet not all children and youth in our country have that opportunity.



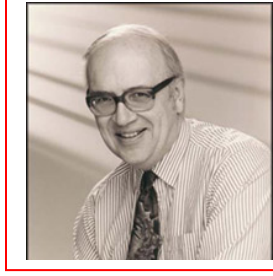
Kimberly Schonert-Reich is Associate Professor, Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and Special Education at the University of British Columbia.

Dr. Schonert-Reich will provide an overview and results of a study that was undertaken by UBC and United Way of the Lower Mainland on out of school time of school aged children and their social and emotional well-being. This research has national implications and provides clear evidence for the importance of community activities in supporting the developmental needs of children age 6-12.



Wayne Hammond is Vice President & Executive Director of Resiliency Canada, a Calgary-based not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing the well-being of children, youth and their families by generating knowledge about and the ability to assess the resiliency factors and developmental strengths that are essential to the well-being of individuals and their communities.

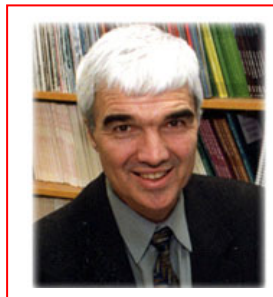
Dr. Hammond will describe a model of resiliency as it relates to children age 6-12 and discuss some of the research which clearly demonstrates how this approach can provide insight into increasing the capacity of individuals to cope with adversity. By supporting and nurturing "protective factors", we can build developmental strengths to offset and overcome "risk factors".



John Abbott is President of The 21st Learning Initiative, a not-for-profit Foundation in the United States dedicated to exploring human learning and how it can be further facilitated by communities around the world. Working with various people throughout 12 countries, the Initiative issued a

Policy Paper on the strategic and resource implications of a new model of learning. His latest book is "The Unfinished Revolution" which he co-authored with Terry Ryan. His earlier book "The Child is Father of the Man: How Humans Learn and Why" (January, 2000) was dedicated to all those who believe that we have not simply inherited this world from our parents, but have been loaned it by our children.

Mr. Abbott will speak to new understanding and insight about the brain, human intelligence and human memory in order to better understand human learning and the strategic and resource implications of a new model of learning and how it can be further facilitated by communities.



J. Douglas Willms is a Professor and Director of the Canadian Research Institute for Social Policy at the University of New Brunswick (UNB). He holds the Canada Research Chair in Human Development at UNB and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and Research Fellow of the Canadian Institute for Advanced

Research. Dr. Willms is the editor of *Vulnerable Children: Findings from Canada's National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth*, (University of Alberta Press, 2002) which received the Canadian Policy Research Award in 2002, the author of *Monitoring School Performance: A Guide for Educators* (Falmer Press, 1992), and the co-editor of *Schools, Classrooms, and Pupils: International Studies of Schooling from a Multilevel Perspective* (Academic Press, 1991).

Dr. Willms will speak about vulnerability, social policy development in Canada and from an international perspective, and comment on policy implications for middle childhood.

Program At-A-Glance



Sunday, April 22 (3:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.)

Learning Summit Registration, Kids Speak Out Forum, Parents Talk Back Forum, and Welcome Reception

Monday, April 23 (8:00 am – 9:30 pm)

Opening Plenary

- *The Middle Childhood Initiative and Policy Framework* - Larry Gemmel, National Alliance for Children and Youth, and Janis Douglas, Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada
- *The Importance of Middle Childhood and Community Collaboration* - Arlene Perly-Rae, Toronto Middle Childhood Matters Coalition
- *A Rights Based Approach to Middle Childhood* - Landon Pearson, Pearson Centre at Carleton University

Round I - Breakout Sessions (select one of six)

1. Out of School Hours – The Boys and Girls Club Experience
2. Community Collaborations – Calgary Learning Village, Ottawa Middle Childhood Matters Framework, Alliance for Children & Youth of Waterloo
3. Middle Childhood, Media and the Internet – Young Canadians in a Wired World, Cyber Bullying - Kids Help Phone
4. School Health – The School Health Network, Joint Consortium for School Health, Community in the Schools
5. Attitude and Behaviours of School Aged Children – Urban Children and Youth, Health Behaviours – Children Survey Results for 2007 Report
6. A Rights Based Approach to Middle Childhood – UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, A World Fit for Children, and Healthy Children, Healthy Communities

Luncheon Plenary

- *Demographic Changes in Canada and Their Impact on Public Education* - Veronica Lacey, The Learning Partnership
- *Their Future is Now: Healthy Choices for Canada's Children and Youth* – Verda Petry, Health Council of Canada

Round II - Breakout Sessions (select one of six)

7. Supports for Parents – Sexually Healthy Children, Parenting Without Power Struggles, Positive Development for Children in the Middle Years
8. Injury Prevention – Have Injury Prevention Efforts made a Difference? And Boys and Girls Clubs Risk Watch – A Collaborative Approach
9. International Perspectives on Middle Childhood – European and International models of support for Families, Schools, and Communities
10. Children & Adolescents with Special Needs – Centre for Excellence, Facilitating Inter-professional Collaboration
11. Innovation and Partnerships in Education – The Learning Partnership
12. Health and Middle Childhood – Their Future is Now, Healthy Children Healthy Communities, Health Promotion and Research

Networking Opportunity – Specific Topics

Reception, Dinner, and Keynote Speaker

- *A New Model of Learning* - John Abbott, The 21st Century Learning Initiative

Tuesday, April 24 (8:00 am – 4:00 pm)

Breakfast Plenary

- *Out of School Time to Support the Social and Emotional Well-being of Children* - Dr. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, UBC
- *Resiliency and the Middle Years* - Dr. Wayne Hammond, Resiliency Canada

Round III - Breakout Sessions (select one of six)

13. The 21st Century Learning Initiative
14. Toronto Collaborative Initiatives – Middle Childhood Matters Coalition, After School Dinner Theatre, Safe Walk
15. Enhancing the School Experience – The City in the Classroom, Matinée Scolaire
16. Out of School Hours – Boys & Girls Clubs Skill Development, Big Brothers Big Sisters Mentoring
17. Resiliency in the Middle Years – Enhancing Resiliency, Resiliency Canada
18. Out of School Time to Support the Social and Emotional Well-Being of Children Ages 6 to 12

Luncheon Plenary

- *Policy Implications on Middle Childhood* - J. Douglas Willms, Canadian Research Institute for Social Policy at the University of New Brunswick

Round IV - Breakout Sessions (select one of six)

19. Building a Collaborative Middle Childhood Strategy – United Way Lower Mainland, United Way/Centraide Ottawa
20. Aboriginal, First Nations and Inuit Children – Many Hands One Dream, Touchstones of Hope, Wen de , Pauktuutit
21. Nutrition – Breakfast for Learning Community Partners Model, Boys & Girls Clubs Food and Nutrition at School program
22. Mental Health Issues in Middle Childhood
23. Changing the Paradigm – Policy Change for Middle Childhood
24. Policy Implications on Middle Childhood – Exploring models such as Healthy Child Manitoba

Closing Plenary

- *Moving From Theory to Action* - Bob Yates, Yates Thorn and Associates

Middle Childhood Initiative

National Alliance for Children and Youth

The Middle Childhood Initiative

Through funding from the Government of Canada's Social Development Community Partnerships Program, the Middle Childhood Initiative was created to identify and promote comprehensive policy options for school-aged children 6 to 12 and their families and to foster Pan-Canadian alliances and learning networks with specific emphasis on engaging regional and local groups working with children and their families.

Specific objectives for the Middle Childhood Initiative included:

- An analytical/literature review paper on children aged 6 to 12
- An issues paper to stimulate discussion on children aged 6 to 12
- A series of "Policy Briefs" on identified strategic issues unique to children aged 6 to 12
- A "Policy Framework" and recommendations

These documents and findings were then explored further through a series of comprehensive policy consultations in a regional context to engage national, provincial, regional/local networks in discussing emerging issues and identifying policy initiatives unique to children 6 to 12 and their families.

Middle Childhood

The well-being of children in middle childhood is determined by complex interactions between personal and developmental characteristics, social and economic factors, and physical environments. An ecological approach to children's development and well-being explains that children are affected by the environments within which they live and grow. Research in human development has clearly demonstrated that children are affected by a wide variety of family, neighbourhood, community, and broader social influences.

Communities in Eastern Ontario, after identifying gaps in services, programs and policies for children in their middle years, developed a framework to identify developmental assets and needs for middle childhood. This framework – outlined in *Middle Childhood Matters: A Framework to Promote Healthy Development of Children 6 to 12* – focuses on four key elements of healthy development – meeting fundamental needs; stable and nurturing relationships; opportunities to develop competencies; and safe and caring environments, and was used as the basis for our further exploration of issues and policy implications.

These elements of healthy development are influenced by the three major environments that children are surrounded by:

- **Families** – Families continue to be the major influence. Nurturing, supportive families and positive, consistent parenting styles have been demonstrated to have a strong influence on healthy child development. Furthermore, family income, and social and educational status and employment experience all influence children's development.
- **Schools** - The transition to middle childhood is marked by entry into formal education – so the school now becomes a major influencing factor in their lives.

- **Communities** - These children begin to reach out to other community resources. Participation in recreation, arts, club activities and playing or 'hanging around' with their peers, all begin to play an increasingly important role in their lives. Families continue to rely on community resources to share in providing care and supervision when children are not in school. Middle childhood is that period in life when the child leaves the security of his or her family and independently enters the external world.

Issues affecting the well-being of Canadian children aged 6 to 12

There is general agreement in Canadian literature now that the middle years are significant. Children in the middle years comprise a large number of our children and youth – there are nearly three million children in Canada between the ages of 6 and 12. They represent the diversity of the Canadian population. Developmentally, this is a time of significant emotional, social, cognitive and physical development. These children are laying down the building blocks for future well-being and participation in society.



National Alliance for Children and Youth

The National Alliance for Children and Youth and its 46 member organizations are dedicated to enhancing the well-being of children and youth in Canada through initiatives which promote collaboration and mobilize knowledge and research to support effective practices and policy development on a Pan-Canadian basis.



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Middle Childhood Initiative

National Alliance for Children and Youth

Research and Policy Briefs

The Alliance and its members prepared a series of policy briefs and research documents on middle childhood which reflect the issues identified by organizations that participated. These include:

1. **Aboriginal Children, Young People, and Families** - Prepared by First Nations Child & Family Caring Society
2. **Mental Health in Middle Childhood** - Prepared by Wood's Homes
3. **Child Nutrition** - Prepared by Breakfast for Learning
4. **Poverty and Middle Childhood** - Prepared by Campaign 2000
5. **School-Aged Child Care** - Prepared by Canadian Child Care Federation
6. **Inuit Children** - Prepared by Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada
7. **Housing as a Social Determinant of Health** - Prepared by United Nations Association Canada, Healthy Children, Healthy Communities Project
8. **The Need for Quality Physical Education Programs in Canadian Schools** - Prepared by The Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
9. **Education and Middle Childhood – Teaching for Deep Understanding** - Prepared by Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario

Research papers funded by the Canadian Council on Learning include:

- **Recreation in Middle Childhood: An Overview**
- **Immigrant and Refugee Children and Youth in their Middle Years**

These and other documents are available from our website at: www.nationalchildrensalliance.com.

Community Consultations

Local organizations with strong networks in communities across Canada were invited to host Community Consultations focusing on Middle Childhood to discuss emerging issues and to identify policy initiatives unique to children 6 to 12 and their families. Consultations took place in the following communities:

- Lower Mainland, November 24, 2005
- Ottawa, January 11, 2006
- Calgary, October 5, 2006
- Prince Albert, October 11, 2006
- Halifax, October 11, 2006
- Montreal, November 9, 2006
- Winnipeg, November 15, 2006

Middle Childhood Initiative Partners

While the Alliance engages all of its members in the work of the Middle Childhood Initiative, the following local community-based networks are active partners:

Lower Mainland Middle Childhood Matters Initiative
The Calgary Children's Initiative
Toronto Middle Childhood Matters Coalition
Middle Childhood Matters of Ottawa-Carleton

Middle Childhood Working Group

A working group provided strategic direction and support to the Middle Childhood Initiative. Current members of the working group are:

- Janis Douglas (Chair) - Manager, Capacity Development and Community Affairs Boys & Girls Clubs of Canada
- Peggy Austin, Director, Impact and Investment, Children and Youth, United Way/Centraide Ottawa
- Jeff Calbick, Planning Consultant, United Way of the Lower Mainland
- Lana Crossman, Publications Manager, Canadian Child Care Federation
- Melissa Dickey, Director, Research and Policy, United Way/Centraide Ottawa
- Nancy Dutton, Staff Associate, Calgary Children's Initiative
- Sara Farrell, Middle Years Matter Coalition, Toronto Public Health
- Eric Friesen, Manager Youth Programs, United Way of Winnipeg
- Louise Hanvey, Consultant
- Maureen Kellerman, Senior Project Manager, Pan-Canadian Early Years Initiative, United Way of Canada – Centraide Canada
- Donna McLeod & Varina Russell, Co-Directors, Calgary Children's Initiative, United Way of Calgary
- Joanne McQuiggan, Executive Director, Thrive!
- David Millen, Executive Director, Child and Youth Friendly Ottawa
- Lidia Monaco, Middle Years Matter Coalition of Toronto, Director, Children Youth & Family Services, St. Christopher House
- Kimberley Murray, Middle Childhood Initiative, City of Ottawa
- Martha O'Connor, Executive Director, Breakfast for Learning
- Serge Saint-André, Directeur, Centre du Parc, YMCA du grand Montréal
- Stephanie Simonsen, Regional Director, Boys and Girls Club of Nova Scotia
- Maria Sterniczuk, Project Officer, United Nations Association of Canada
- Jama Watt, Project Co-ordinator, Community and Outreach Development, CHEO
- Staff: Larry Gemmel, Executive Director, and Louise Kekanovich, Assistant, National Alliance for Children and Youth

Funding for the Middle Childhood Initiative was provided by:



Human Resources and
Social Development Canada

Ressources humaines et
Développement social Canada

“Kids Speak Out” Forum

Sunday, April 22, 2007 – Ottawa, Ontario



- Purpose:** The National Alliance for Children and Youth is hosting a National Learning Summit on Middle Childhood from April 22-24, 2007 in Ottawa to highlight work that is taking place across Canada in support of children age 6-12: to share information and knowledge; to explore common themes and regional differences; to explore a draft policy framework; and to network and engage with others. In conjunction with the Learning Summit, the “Kids Speak Out” forum is an opportunity to hear directly from the voices of children age 6-12 about experiences and issues that concerns them at home, at school, and in the community. This will be of great interest to those attending the Learning Summit who works directly and indirectly with children from across the country – practitioners, researchers, policy makers, academics, service providers, and funders.
- Format:** Children aged 6 to 12 will gather in a theatre setting and interact with one another to discuss issues that they encounter on an every day basis. A “talk” show format will be utilized with skilled facilitators to ask questions and help the children to describe their experiences. In addition, the children can participate in a “Kids Speak Out” video that will be used during the conference and to increase awareness of middle childhood; participate in hands-on painting of an Art Miles mural promoting peace; enjoy some entertainment; and join in the official welcome reception for the Learning Summit.
- Participants:** Children age 6 to 12 accompanied by an adult to the Forum are invited to participate. We anticipate 40-60 children. In addition, adults and Learning Summit participants are invited to participate in this Forum as an audience member (up to 150 seats are available) or to attend the concurrent “Parents Talk Back” Forum (see over) as a participant.
- Time:** 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
- Location:** Hampton Inn Ottawa Conference Centre
Off Highway 417 at the Vanier Parkway / Riverside Drive Exit (Exit #117)
200 Conventry Road
Telephone: (613) 741-2300
Room: 201
- Program:**
- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. | “Kids Speak Out” Forum |
| 5:00 p.m. | Kids Forum Reception (cookies and juice) |
| 5:00 – 6:00 p.m. | Entertainment and Mural Painting |
| 6:00 p.m. | Learning Summit Welcome Reception and Opening Remarks |
| 6:30 p.m. | Kids Forum Ends |
| 6:30 – 7:30 p.m. | Learning Summit Networking Opportunity (cash bar) |
- Facilitators:** **David Millen**, Executive Director, Child and Youth Friendly Ottawa and **Darcy Santor**, Professor, School of Psychology, University of Ottawa, and Senior Research Scientist at the Provincial Centre of Excellence in Child and Youth Mental Health at CHEO.
- To Register:** To register, send the name(s) of the child(ren) and organization or adult who will accompany the child(ren) to the Forum by e-mail to the National Alliance for Children and Youth at info@nationalchildrensalliance.com.

If you have any questions, please give us a call at (613) 560-5843.

“Parents Talk Back” Forum

Sunday, April 22, 2007 – Ottawa, Ontario



Purpose: The National Alliance for Children and Youth is hosting a National Learning Summit on Middle Childhood from April 22-24, 2007 in Ottawa to highlight work that is taking place across Canada in support of children age 6-12: to share information and knowledge; to explore common themes and regional differences; to explore a draft policy framework; and to network and engage with others.

In conjunction with the Learning Summit, a “Parents Talk Back”^{*} forum will be held to provide interested parents and Summit participants with an overview of the Middle Childhood Initiative and the issues affecting children age 6-12. This will be an opportunity to hear from parents of children age 6-12 about their experiences and challenges.

Format: An overview of the Middle Childhood Initiative will be presented exploring the issues identified through our research and consultations. Examples of programs, services, and models to support children age 6 to 12 and their families will be discussed. Parents will have the opportunity to make comments, relate their own experiences, and pose questions to a panel.

Participants: Parents accompanying their children to the “Kids Speak Out” Forum and participants attending the Learning Summit are invited to participate. Parents and children are then invited to the Learning Summit Welcome Reception.

Time: 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Location: Hampton Inn Ottawa Conference Centre
Off Highway 417 at the Vanier Parkway / Riverside Drive Exit (Exit #117)
200 Conventry Road
Telephone: (613) 741-2300
Room: 210

Program:

3:30 – 5:00 p.m.	“Parents Talk Back” Forum (concurrent to “Kids Speak Out” Forum)
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Join the Kids Forum Reception (cookies and juice)
6:00 p.m.	Learning Summit Welcome Reception and Opening Remarks
6:30 p.m.	Parents and Kids Forum Ends
6:30 – 7:30 p.m.	Learning Summit Networking Opportunity (cash bar)

Facilitators: A panel of professionals involved in research and services for children will host the Forum.

To Register: If you are attending the Learning Summit, complete the registration form. If you are a parent and you are accompanying your child(ren) to the Kids Forum, see “Kids Speak Out” Forum insert on how to register.

If you have any questions, please give us a call at (613) 560-5843 or e-mail to info@nationalchildrensalliance.com.

^{*} “Parents Talk Back” is our tongue in cheek name for the Forum, which is designed to provide a sympathetic ear for parents and their concerns.