

National Children's Alliance (NCA)

E-mail Digest, week of 12-16 January, 2004

NCA ACTIVITIES:

1. **Correction:** Meeting of Toronto-area NCA members on 11 February
2. **Urgent:** Reminder to sign up for the Forum on Public Policy and UN Convention on Rights of Child, 29-30 Jan. 2004
3. **Register:** for NCA Symposium in Kananaskis, Alberta, March 24th-26th, 2004.

NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS:

1. **Reminder:** International Conference on Youth and Human Security Leadership
2. **Publication:** Increasing numbers of children in residential care
3. **Announcement:** Call for Papers: 36th Banff International Conference on Behavioural Science
4. **Notice:** Call for Applications for Grant Funding from Social Development Directorate
5. **News:** CAILC community partner gets funding for citizen engagement project in rural Quebec

ISSUE ALERT:

1. Participate in Youth Caucus for 2004 International Conference on AIDS
2. 2004 Global Action Week for Education

NCA ACTIVITIES:

1. **Correction:**

The meeting of the Toronto-area members of the NCA scheduled for 11th of February will take place from 10am to 2pm, NOT from 9:30 to 12:30, as indicated in the previous Digest.

Please RSVP your attendance at this meeting by contacting Tara Ashtakala, Manager, National Children's Alliance, at tashtakala@nvo-onb.ca or call (613) 238-1591 ext. 228, at the latest by Friday 6 February.

Please note that we are still looking for a venue for that meeting. Any member that would be willing in hosting the meeting on the 11th is asked to talk to Tara, at the above coordinates, at the earliest possible.

2. **Appeal to members** to attend the Forum on Public Policy and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 29-30 January, 2004 in Ottawa: **The Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children, the Society for Children and Youth (SCY) of BC and the International Institute for Child Rights and Development of the University of Victoria**, in collaboration with the **National Children's Alliance**, are hosting a forum on moving forward on the commitments contained within the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). There will be presentations and moderated discussion about: existing child rights instruments; international reporting processes; successes and gaps in Canada's implementation of the Convention; Aboriginal and youth perspective; the Convention and the justice system; research on the impact of implementation on children's well-being and participation; opportunities to consider and respond to the National Plan of Action; and case studies of how the CRC has been used in Canada. In the discussion sessions, the SCY will be testing its tools for integrating the CRC's provisions into public policy, legislation and practice.

Due to low registration thus far, the deadline for registration has been extended to 22 January. A number of government representatives and youth have confirmed their attendance; the NGO participation, by comparison, is somehow much less. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely-ratified human rightstreaty in history; it is the one set of principles that almost all the governments of the world have agreed upon. In Canada, grassroots community work is already putting the principles and provisions of the Convention into practice; public institutions and authorities have yet to acknowledge this voluntary sector contribution to the implementation of their official obligations, and lag behind in incorporating these practices in their own policies. **Please come and benefit from the valuable information that will be discussed in this forum, namely: on how to use the Convention as a child-centred policy tool**

3. **Electronic registration is up and running** for this year's NCA Annual Symposium in Kananaskis, Alberta. Just go to the NCA website (<http://www.nationalchildrensalliance.com/>), click on the "News" section, click on the link "Register Now for the NCA National Symposium..." and enter the username (ncamember) and password (children). Travel subsidies will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis, with consideration going to balancing participation by sector and region; participants are expected to cover their own accommodation and ground costs. The Kananaskis Resort is offering an excellent room rate at 75\$ per night and we have reserved, until 14 February, a block of 70 rooms for our guests. Prior to the conference, the NCA is hosting, on 24th March a one-day training session on Aboriginal partnerships, given by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society;

participation is limited to 30 individuals. The meetings on the the 25th and 26th will consist of dynamic keynote speakers and concurrent panel discussions on Aboriginal issues, research and monitoring of public commitments to children and advocacy tools and lessons. A networking reception and special entertainment are planned for the two evenings of the conference.

NEWS FOR OUR MEMBERS:

1. The Just Act! Youth Leadership Conference is being held on 4-7 March 2004 in Ottawa. It will bring together 10 educators and youth from across Canada to learn about human security issues, participate in leadership skills workshops and use creative arts to enhance campaigns for global change. For more information, please contact War Child Canada at <http://www.warchild.ca/studentscentre.justact.asp>.

2. A Last Resort: The Growing Concern about Children in Residential Care is a new publication from the International Save the Children Alliance about issues and case studies from around the world. The document aims to draw attention to an area of child rights that has long been ignored and that is now becoming an increasing problem for children of all races and countries. For more information, please visit <http://www.savethechildren.ca/>.

3. Terrifying Experiences: There will be a conference on the Resilience and Vulnerability to Psychological Trauma held in Banff, Alberta, from 21-24 March 2004. Speakers and workshops will address psychological trauma that children, adolescents, adults and communities face as a result of natural disasters, violence and international conflict. Abstracts are due by 28 February. Please see <http://www.banffbehavsci.ubc.ca/> for more information.

4. The Social Development Directorate of HRDC is accepting applications for Grant Funding until 27 February. This Call for Applications seeks to strengthen the capacity of national organizations in the social non-profit sector that have as their priority children and their families. Please go to <http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/hrib/sdd-dds> for more information.

5. A local partner of the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC), the Centre-Ressources pour la vie autonome – region du Bas Saint-Laurent, has received project funding from HRDC to learn more about community barriers to people with disabilities in this large rural area. The CAILC looks forward to benefiting all its members with the resource tool that will be developed from the project.

ISSUE ALERT:

1. Youth Caucus for 2004 International Conference on AIDS: is an e-platform that aims to facilitate the participation of young people across the world, both in the preparatory processes and at the main meetings of the 15th International Conference on AIDS to be held in Bangkok, July 2004. Young people are the most vulnerable and the most affected by AIDS. The goals of the Youth Caucus among others are: i. Review of past and present strategies in the fight against AIDS in order to develop effective preventive strategies; ii. To support as many youth as possible around the world with gender balance and regional representation to participate at the various processes of the conference; iii. To translate and publish the daily proceeding of the conference online so as to enable youth every where in the world to follow systematically the pace of proceedings at the conference; iv. to engage youth in networking activities before, during and after the conference in 2004. For more information about the Youth Caucus, go to www.yahogroups.com/group/aids2004youth.

2. The Global Campaign for Education (GCE), a coalition of NGOs and teachers' unions dedicated to fulfil the UN Millenium Summit's goal of "Education for All by 2015", is organizing a global Action Week for Education to be held in more than one hundred countries. The aim is to pressure political leaders into fulfilling this commitment and gives the chance to millions of children to voice their right to free, quality public education. The GCE has prepared a classroom activity pack for teachers in the developed world to help their pupils understand the challenges to universal education in the South and the external challenges their developing world peers face in learning the basics that kids in the North take for granted. For more information, go to http://www.campaignforeducation.org/_html/actionweek/2004-aw/frameset.shtml.

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