

Not there yet: Canada's implementation of the General Measures of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child ^[1]

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Description:

In a country like Canada, with economic means, stable institutions and technical knowledge, a much more progressive realization of children's rights in laws, policies and services may be expected.

Canada has made progress on many fronts. Many children are doing well. Breastfeeding rates are increasing. Improved school nutrition policies and practices are proliferating. The government has made a recent commitment to improve the mental health of children and adults. Most provinces have independent advocates for children.

Compared to other affluent nations, however, Canada has a large proportion of children in care and in the justice system; high rates of childhood obesity and mental illness; fewer quality-assured childcare spaces relative to other countries of similar economic means; insufficient legal protection of children from violence and exploitation; and disparities between the performance of Aboriginal children and other Canadian children on many measures of well-being.

By and large, Canadian families provide for their children and protect them from harm. We know, however, that children also have a direct call on governments for the provision and protection of their rights. Children and families need policies, laws and investments that specifically consider the rights and well-being of the youngest citizens, and governments at all levels that are accountable for their responsibilities to children.

This report reviews the implementation in Canada of the general measures of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It recalls the recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and by Canada's Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights to bolster Canada's legal and institutional arrangements to build a truly protective and rights-enabling framework for all children.

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