



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### First province-wide multimedia child rights awareness campaign launches in BC

NOVEMBER 8, 2010—B.C.'s first multi-media child rights public awareness campaign is being launched, to challenge attitudes and assumptions about children and their role in society.

The campaign, an initiative of the Society for Children and Youth of BC and its partners, has a potential reach of 5.5 million views each year. Public transit ads across the province, campaign website ([www.everychild.ca](http://www.everychild.ca)), child rights posters, social media, newsletters, and a Public Service Announcement running in movie theatres and on the internet will all be part of child rights public education for the month of November and throughout 2011.

"There is a great need for this campaign," says **Tina Tam, Executive Director, Society for Children and Youth of BC**. "Fifteen years after Canada ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, an Ipsos Reid poll indicated that 75 percent of British Columbians were not familiar with child rights and 86% of respondents agreed that the public needs more information. 2010 marks the 19<sup>th</sup> year of Canada's commitment to child rights and children and youth in this province are still challenged by not having their basic needs meet. We all have a shared responsibility to support and uphold the rights for all children and youth."

For the past four years the Society, along with their partners (B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth, the BC Centre for Safe Schools and Communities, and Reel Youth) have laid the groundwork for this campaign, surveying and consulting with communities and organizations all around the province. The focus was to examine how British Columbians want to get information about child rights and what kind of support they need to implement child rights.

"A child rights awareness campaign is an important way to change the UN convention from being 'just' a ratified piece of paper to changing how people think," said **Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, BC's Representative for Children and Youth**. "This campaign will encourage us all to examine how we can make B.C. children's lives better, in our homes and communities."

Tam said the campaign will be integral in promoting the full realization of children's rights in British Columbia. "There has never been a greater need in B.C. for child rights education and advocacy. This is possible through meaningful engagement of communities and children and youth in our province, but the first step is awareness."

People in all areas of work—health care, education, media, social services, government, business, community development, and the judicial system, need to know how their work directly affects children's rights and what they can do to assure that children's rights are respected on a day to day basis, she said. "Families, particularly parents, have to be given all the support and resources they need to foster and nurture the rights of their own children. Children themselves must be empowered to realize their rights, and the responsibilities that come with their rights."

Tam said that each region in B.C. has its own unique challenges in implementing child rights. A provincial campaign can focus on the unique issues B.C. children face when it comes to realizing their rights.

*Editors: All campaign images and rights-related images are available upon request. A backgrounder on Canada's commitment and obligations to the UNCRC is also available.*

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**CONTACT:**

Christina Thiele, Communications and Child Rights Project Coordinator  
Society for Children and Youth of BC | ph 604.822.0033 cell 604.418.0069 / fx 604.822.9556  
[christina@scyofbc.org](mailto:christina@scyofbc.org) [www.everychild.ca](http://www.everychild.ca) / [www.scyofbc.org](http://www.scyofbc.org)