

TO: Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:

Original Signed by 

Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: March 9, 2018

SUBJECT: Municipal Children's Charter

ORIGIN

September 19, 2017¹ – Regional Council Motion

THAT Regional Council request a staff report on creating an HRM Children's Charter of Rights guided by the belief that "all children deserve basic rights and freedoms and that all levels of government, in partnership with communities, have a duty to support families by putting the health and well-being of children first." The HRM Children's Charter of Rights is to include areas under the municipal mandate as outlined in the MGA and Halifax Charter and should include consideration of:

1. **The Right to Affordable Housing:** enforce minimum standards in dwellings with young children and ensure affordable housing is considered with every new development and/or renovation project.
2. **The Right to Affordable Child Care:** consideration of permitting more "home-based" or neighbourhood day care centres in Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-Laws.
3. **The Right to Access Healthy Food:** Encourage more community gardens, Mobile Food Markets.
4. **The Right to Safety:** ensure the Integrated Halifax Regional Police / RCMP continue Community Officers presence in the schools / communities and the School Crossing Guard Program; Traffic: ensure pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalk/crosswalk) is adequate especially in elementary school districts.
5. **The Right to Safe Potable Water:** work with Halifax Regional Water Commission by developing options to assist families in danger of having water services cut.
6. **The Right to Recreation and Healthy Lifestyle:** continue to offer affordable recreation activities for all; consider expanding the Inclusion Program as required; ensure Community Space is included in all developments; Continue Active Transportation and Integrated Mobility Plan and trail development to ensure healthy/active living options for families.

¹ <https://www.halifax.ca/index.php/city-hall/regional-council/september-19-2017-halifax-regional-council> | http://archive.isiglobal.ca/vod/halifax/archive_2017-09-19.mp4.html

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

HRM Charter, S.N.S. 2008. C. 39

34(3) The Council shall provide direction on the administration, plans, policies and programs of the Municipality to the Chief Administrative Officer.

There is no specific legislative authority for the adoption of a Children's Charter; however, depending on the proposed content and format, the Halifax Regional Municipality may find legislative authority for specific proposals throughout the *HRM Charter*, including in Part III (Powers), Part IV (Finance), Part VII (By-laws), Part VIII (Planning & Development), Part XII (Streets and Highways), Part XV (Dangerous Or Unightly Premises).

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council

1. Defer a decision on the adoption of a Children's Charter pending the development of a Social Development Framework.

BACKGROUND

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Children's charters are typically based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention is the most widely and rapidly ratified core human rights treaty in history.² It has achieved near-universal acceptance, having now been ratified by 193 parties – more than belong to the United Nations or have acceded to the Geneva Conventions.³ The Convention came into force in Canada in 1991.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is based on four basic principles:



Principle 1

Non-discrimination

Every child has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status.



Principle 2

Best interests of the child

When decisions are made that affect the lives of children, it's very important to think about what is best for the child.



Principle 3

Right to survival, protection and development

Governments should protect children from harm, and help children live and grow to be the best they can be



Principle 4

Right to participation

Children have the right to give their opinions in all matters that affect them and to have their voices heard. Their views should always be taken seriously and they should have more say as they grow older.

² See <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/rights-children.html>

³ See https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/237_202.htm

The Convention has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.⁴ It spells out the basic human rights that children everywhere have: the right to survival; to develop to the fullest; to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and to participate fully in family, cultural and social life.⁵ The Convention explains how adults and governments must work together to protect children's interests. Since all rights are interconnected and equally important, decisions regarding any right must be made in the light of all other rights.

Experience with children's charters in other jurisdictions: Numerous Canadian municipalities have drafted and/or adopted children's charters, including: Campbell River, Cornwall,⁶ Kamloops, Lambton County, New Westminster, Niagara, Peel, Prince Albert, Regina, Revelstoke, Richmond, Squamish, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Vancouver (North Shore), and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph. Copies of the children's charters for each of these municipalities are included in Attachment 2.⁷

Canadian municipalities have generally followed common approaches to drafting and adopting a children's charter (see Attachment 3).⁸ Engagement specific to the development of municipal children's charters typically focuses on the kind of life envisioned for children; principles/rights that could be included in a local children's charter; and roles of government/communities/individuals and families in supporting these principles.⁹ Where a third-party leads the development of a children's charter for a region, the municipality itself is typically invited to endorse the children's charter as an early/first step in launching the charter to the broader community

Rights in Canadian municipal children's charters map closely onto the rights set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (see Attachment 4). In making children's charters unique to their communities, municipalities do, however, diverge from the Convention to some degree.¹⁰ Canadian municipal children's charters all incorporate statements or principles that relate to children's quality of life, housing, nutrition, education, health, recreation, family support, and safety. Some of the children's charters include non-discrimination language that protects children (based on gender, ability, ethnicity, culture or religion). Only a few of Canada's municipal children's charters explicitly address the right to privacy, children's right to be informed of their rights or children's right to express themselves.

DISCUSSION

Why separate rights for children: Children need special rights because of their unique needs. They need additional protection that adults do not require. Reasons for singling out children's rights include the following:¹¹

- **Vulnerability:** Children start life with greater vulnerability. Children must rely on adults for nurturing,

⁴ The Convention on the Rights of the Child, with a preamble and fifty-four articles, was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly 20 November, 1989, and entered into force on 2 September, 1990. See

http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/44/25

⁵ See https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/237_202.htm

⁶ Although Cornwall has endorsed a children's charter, a visual for the Cornwall charter could not be located. See [http://mail.cornwall.ca/Active/Development/egenda.nsf/965d04e85bb82eb4852573ae007b4532/9e7594c3fe7df15f85257d6a004a1ec3/\\$FILE/Proclamation%20-%20Children's%20Charter%20of%20Rights.pdf](http://mail.cornwall.ca/Active/Development/egenda.nsf/965d04e85bb82eb4852573ae007b4532/9e7594c3fe7df15f85257d6a004a1ec3/$FILE/Proclamation%20-%20Children's%20Charter%20of%20Rights.pdf)

⁷ A nation-wide Children's Charter is also currently being drafted by Children First Canada. See <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8nXuCACJM7FNThjVmtHNTnZWRqV0NHNVRVWVgdxYWN6ekow/view>

⁸ Common phases/stages include: collecting children's voices; inviting stakeholder input; creating a vision; launching a charter; endorsing a charter; and reporting on and celebrating charter implementation.

⁹ See <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7a6a6e4c-2c45-49c5-ad6b-c3cc2922d585/resource/3b5ac271-59bc-421e-80d0-44d19bb058c7/download/70143492014SummingUpWhatAlbertansSaidAboutAlbertaChildrensCharter2014-09-29.pdf>

¹⁰ For instance, none of Canada's municipal children's charters explicitly address treatment of child refugees, child labour conditions, freedom from kidnapping, exclusion from military service or access to information.

¹¹ See <https://www.unicef.ca/en/policy-advocacy-for-children/about-the-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>

protection and guidance. Because they are still developing, children are especially vulnerable to poverty and to inadequate health care, education, nutrition, safe water, housing, community services, protection and environmental pollution.

- **Disproportionate impact:** The actions, or inactions, of government impact children more strongly than other groups in society. Most government policy affects children to some degree. Policymaking that fails to take children into account has a negative impact on the future of all members of society.
- **Agency:**¹² Children's views are rarely heard and rarely considered in the political process. Children do not vote and, do not otherwise take part in political processes. Without special attention to children, in decisions affecting them, there is a risk that the impacts on children will be harmful.

Children's charters are a form of public declaration that children are especially vulnerable and have a right to expect special consideration and protection. Efforts to promote children's rights promote a sense of community and help children find their place in our society.

Aspirational character: Children's charters can be characterized as aspirational, not legally binding, and a guiding policy direction for communities.¹³ They represent a commitment to uphold a "children first" approach from families, parents, guardians, governments, and the local community, including the non-profit and voluntary sector.

Obligation to act: As articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, governments have a shared responsibility for the well-being, safety, security, education, and health of children. While the primary responsibility for children's wellbeing rests with parents and guardians, the community needs to support them in their role as primary caregivers. Government's obligation to act is heightened where children suffer from poverty, homelessness, abuse, neglect, preventable diseases or unequal access to good quality education.¹⁴

While work is ongoing to address children's welfare, available evidence suggests that more needs to be done to protect the interests of HRM's children:

- 1 in 5 children in HRM live in poverty;¹⁵
- child poverty rates have remained consistently high over the last decade;¹⁶
- neighbourhoods such as Dartmouth North (48.9%), Fairview (48.8%), Spryfield (39.6%), Preston (26.9%), and HRM Rural East (23.8%) have critically high rates of child poverty;
- indigenous and racialized children, recent immigrant children, and children with disabilities are more likely to be marginalized in our society;¹⁷
- 1 in 3 people accessing food banks are children and youth;¹⁸
- 2 in 5 people in our workforce have a high school diploma or less;
- less than half of emergency shelter beds in Halifax (80 out of 206 beds) are allocated for youth

¹² Agency is the ability for a person, or agent, to act for herself or himself. A person who is not allowed to act for her/himself is lacking in agency, or is said to have been denied agency.

¹³ See <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/7a6a6e4c-2c45-49c5-ad6b-c3cc2922d585/resource/eca959d3-235e-416c-a0c9-540cea0c2a04/download/2013-Together-We-Raise-Tomorrow-Alberta-Childrens-Charter-Fact-Sheet-2013-06-14.pdf>

¹⁴ See <https://www.unicef.ca/en/policy-advocacy-for-children/about-the-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>

¹⁵ A Generation of Broken Promises: The 2014 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Nova Scotia found that 18.6% of children under age 18 in Halifax lived in poverty. See <https://halifaxfoodpolicy.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/foodcounts-assessment-web-fin4.pdf> (p.39)

¹⁶ See <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/2017-report-card-child-and-family-poverty-nova-scotia>

¹⁷ See <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/2017-report-card-child-and-family-poverty-nova-scotia>

¹⁸ Of 8,555 people accessing a food bank in 2013, 2,660 were children. See <https://halifaxfoodpolicy.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/foodcounts-assessment-web-fin4.pdf> (p.10)

and/or women with children;¹⁹

- 1 in 3 emergency shelter users are youth and children;²⁰
- 38% of the 165 schools that make up the Halifax Regional School Board (HRSB), Le Conseil Scolaire Acadien Provincial (CSAP) and the 18 private schools do not have breakfast programs;²¹

Capacity to act: Although children's charters across Canada have broad applicability and include provisions which go beyond municipal jurisdiction, they also include aspirations and principles that relate to municipal regulation and service delivery. These include, but are not limited to:

- facilitating access to quality child care;
- building accessible, inclusive and safe neighbourhoods;
- maintaining a healthy/sustainable built and natural environment;
- providing recreational and cultural experiences for residents of all abilities, cultures and incomes;
- facilitating affordable, appropriate housing for families; and
- improving access to healthy, affordable food;

As reflected in Attachment 1, the municipality is already working, in multiple areas, towards creating more child and family-friendly communities. Attachment 1 focuses largely on municipal activities relating to children from birth to 12 years of age. Municipal activities relating to youth (13 to 18 years of age) may not be included.²² The definition of "child" (i.e. age range) varies among jurisdictions that have adopted a Children's Charter.

Evolving social policy framework: In December of 2017, Council requested a staff report on the creation of a social policy lens.²³ A social policy framework formalizes a way of thinking about and responding to the social impact of changes in a community. In doing so, the framework defines the role of the municipality in responding to current and future social issues.²⁴ This may include opportunities to engage in:

- needs assessment and evaluation to identify unmet or partially met social needs in the community;
- community-based efforts to bring together local government with citizens and community organizations to develop short-term and long-term responses to identified needs;
- policy development activities;
- advocacy to, and partnership with, other levels of government to respond to identified policy, funding, and strategic needs;
- awareness-raising activities that broaden the public's understanding of social issues, policies, and services in the community; and
- other leadership activities related to capacity building, partnering and the development of innovative local solutions to social issues.²⁵

¹⁹ See <http://housingandhomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Halifax-Housing-Needs-Assessment-Final-Report-2015.pdf> (p.64)

²⁰ See <http://housingandhomelessness.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Halifax-Housing-Needs-Assessment-Final-Report-2015.pdf> (p.65)

²¹ For 8 primary schools, 3 junior high schools and 7 high schools the presence of a breakfast program was unknown. See <https://halifaxfoodpolicy.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/foodcounts-assessment-web-fin4.pdf> (pp.138-139)

²² Youth specific examples of municipal activity undertaken by Parks and Recreation include the Youth Advocacy Program (YAP) and the Youth Advisory Committee.

²³ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/171212rc-mins.pdf>

²⁴ See https://www.london.ca/About-London/community-statistics/social-issues/Documents/social_policy_framework.pdf

²⁵ See https://www.london.ca/About-London/community-statistics/social-issues/Documents/social_policy_framework.pdf

Children's charters promote longer-term discussion about support for children. Work on a children's charter could form part of the broader social policy framework needs assessment process and the development of short-term and long-term responses to identified social-policy-related needs. Likewise, a children's charter publicity and endorsement campaign could, theoretically, be part of raising awareness and advocating for community and governmental action in support of a comprehensive social policy framework.

How children's interests could be addressed (within the broader context of a social lens) will, however, be better understood once social-policy-framework recommendations have been developed. A social policy framework would also include considerations of activities to support implementation of policy direction such as the principles of a children's charter and thus increase the likelihood of achieving the desired impact. Staff, therefore, suggest that a final recommendation on a children's charter be deferred until a social policy framework has been given consideration.

Connection to Council priorities: In December 2016 Regional Council established priority outcomes for their term and directed staff to develop multi-year plans to advance those outcomes.²⁶ Adopting a children's charter has the potential to advance the creation of a more child, youth and family friendly city, which is likely to result in several benefits, including:

- supporting healthy child development and improved child outcomes such as school readiness and success;
- facilitating lifelong learning and increased workforce attachment;
- encouraging civility and respectfulness of others; and
- contributing to vibrant, diverse, inter-generational neighbourhoods.

These prospective children's charter benefits are consistent with the social development, healthy livable communities and economic development priority outcomes articulated by Regional Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications identified.

RISK CONSIDERATION

Recommendation: Direct staff to incorporate development of a Children's Charter into the development of a Social Development Framework for the municipality, as appropriate

Risk	Likelihood (1-5)	Impact (1-5)	Risk Level (I/L/M/H/VH)	Mitigation
Financial	–	–	–	N/A
Environmental	–	–	–	N/A
Service Delivery	–	–	–	N/A
People	–	–	–	N/A
Reputation	1	1	L	
Legal and Compliance	–	–	–	N/A

²⁶ The priority outcomes are strategic aspirations for the community that focus on medium to long term desired outcomes. These are not operational or tactical objectives; instead they describe a desired end-state sought for the overall betterment of the entire HRM community.

Alternative 1: Direct staff to proceed with work on the development of a children's charter prior to the development of a social policy framework for the municipality. Staff do not recommend this approach for the reasons articulated in this report.

Risk	Likelihood (1-5)	Impact (1-5)	Risk Level (I/L/M/H/VH)	Mitigation
Financial	–	–	–	N/A
Environmental	–	–	–	N/A
Service Delivery	–	–	–	N/A
People	–	–	–	N/A
Reputation	1	1	L	N/A
Legal and Compliance	–	–	–	N/A

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was undertaken in writing this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

No environmental implications identified.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Regional Council could direct the Chief Administrative Officer to draft a Children's Charter with respect to those issues that fall within the Municipality's legislative mandate, prior to the development of a social policy framework for the municipality. Staff do not recommend this approach for the reasons articulated in this report.
2. Regional Council could support a third-party in its development of a Children's Charter.
3. Regional Council could choose not to pursue further consideration of a Children's Charter.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Overview of current state | municipal activities/initiatives relating to children's welfare
2. Canadian municipal children's charters.
3. Overview of municipal children's charter development
4. Overview of municipal children's charters | comparative table
5. Child friendly version of Un Convention on the Rights of Children

A copy of this report can be obtained online at halifax.ca or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Scott Sheffield, Government Relations and External Affairs, 902.490.3941.

Attachment 1

Overview of Current State | Municipal activities/initiatives relating to children's welfare

PART I – THE RIGHT TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Enforce minimum standards in dwellings with young children and ensure affordable housing is considered with every new development and/or renovation project.

A. Minimum housing standards

Ongoing housing standards inspections are taking place in HRM as required under the Building Code Act, Fire Safety Act, and By-law M-200.

- **Building Construction (Nova Scotia Building Code Act):**²⁷ All buildings in HRM under construction and renovation that require a building permit are inspected at various stages of construction and involve an application, review, and permitting process.²⁸
- **Fire Safety Act Inspections (Nova Scotia Fire Safety Act):**²⁹ All occupied buildings (except residential buildings with less than 4 units) are subject to inspection. Buildings are classified and registered in a database to manage inventory and facilitate a system of re-inspection. The re-inspection regime is a requirement of the Fire Safety Act and restricted to common areas of individual buildings.
- **Standards for Residential Occupancies (By-law M-200):**³⁰ By-law M-200 sets the minimum standards for all residential occupancies in HRM and contains the regulatory framework and technical requirements for the licensing and inspection of rooming houses. By-law M-200 has detailed requirements relating to the condition and habitability of premises (minimum temperature, pest control, ventilation, water potability etc.). Inspections are triggered by “first party” complaints (from tenants) and rely on tenants providing access to their unit. Inspections target livability and are generally focused on living areas of buildings.³¹

Between 2013 and 2015 Regional Council made several motions requesting changes to bylaws respecting minimum standards for residential occupancies. In June 2016 By-law M-100 was repealed and replaced by By-law M-200 to address a number of issues with the, then current, regulatory framework. In 2017 Stantec Consulting Limited was contracted to review HRM’s residential occupancy regulatory framework. Stantec conducted focus groups and interviews in 2017 with regulators, landlords, tenant representatives and tenants about current issues associated with rental properties, experience with By-law M-200, how licensing of residential property would affect them, and the quality of current safety standards in smaller rental units. Staff has received Stantec’s consulting report and, at the writing of this report, are reviewing various options to enhance the safety and livability of rental properties, including:

- mandatory registration of residential rental accommodations;
- proactive inspections using evidence-based decision making (to target high risk properties);

²⁷ See <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/buildcod.htm> and <https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/bcregs.htm>

²⁸ Provincial and Federal buildings are exempt.

²⁹ Fire Safety Act (FSA) Inspections are a Provincial requirement of each Municipality under Section 13 and 14 of the Fire Safety Act. See <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/fire%20safety.pdf> and <https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/fsfiresf.htm>

³⁰ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/legislation-by-laws/By-lawM-200.pdf>

³¹ By-law M-200 is the main legislation in HRM used to enforce standards of rentals, as evidenced by the fact that matters relating to rental conditions are consistently forwarded to HRM by the Province. In comparison to By-law M-200, the language in the Residential Tenancies Act is too vague to be enforceable.

- establishing safety enhancements that are applied based on risk/building type;
- programing designed to educate tenants of their rights and responsibilities including their impact on the surrounding community; and
- enhancing accountability to tenants and property owners through penalties.

A staff report addressing these options is being drafted.

B. Affordable housing in new developments/redevelopments

Over the past several years, there has been support from Regional Council for affordable housing initiatives.³² The non-profit housing sector (exclusive of co-ops, group homes, transitional housing and emergency housing) in HRM is composed of approximately 400 units that are owned and managed by fifteen non-profit housing organizations. In the past 25 years, there has been little expansion of the non-profit housing stock in the Municipality largely due to the elimination of long-term federal housing investments.

Permit fees: Municipalities across Canada charge a variety of fees for new residential developments or renovations to existing buildings.³³ In October 2017, Regional Council adopted amendments to By-law B-201, the Building Bylaw to exempt building permit fees for developments proposed by not-for-profit organizations or charities that include affordable units.³⁴ The amendments permit the full waiver of the fees for construction, demolition, additions, renovations, repairs and attached signs for developments by not-for-profit organizations, where at least 25% of floor area is dedicated to affordable housing, and they have entered into an agreement or have received funding from Housing Nova Scotia or CMHC.

Property taxes: HRM regularly provides single year tax exemptions that convert the commercial rate to the residential rate and provide a reduction in the residential rate (ranging from 25% to 100% for not-for-profit organizations). Subsection 89(6) of the *HRM Charter* does not allow the Municipality to grant multi-year tax exemptions.³⁵ HRM has requested that the Province amend the *HRM Charter* to allow for a special tax rate that will allow eligible not-for-profits to be taxed a lower rate.

Administrative Order 10 allows for applications for partial exemption from the payment of real property taxes rated on residential properties within the Municipality. Exemptions are permitted if the total income of all persons eighteen years of age or older occupying the property, as their principal residence, falls within the thresholds established by Administrative Order 10.³⁶

Community grants program: HRM supports the non-profit housing sector through the Community Grants Program, which provides grants to non-for-profit organizations and charities, including those that provide secure, appropriate and affordable housing options.³⁷ The funding program provides project grants and capital grants, but does not fund recurring operating expenses or any operating expenses assigned to a project.

³² For the purposes of this report, housing is considered affordable when no more than 30% of low and moderate income households' gross income is spent on housing. This includes the cost of mortgage rent, monthly heat (includes gas, oil and electricity), water, and utilities.

³³ There are various charges and permits that are required when developing a building in HRM. These include building permits, development permits, plumbing fees, occupancy permits, solid waste charges and streets and services fees.

³⁴ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/171205rc1413.pdf>

³⁵ Several non-for-profit organizations have suggested that the need to re-apply for tax exemption on an annual basis reduces predictability for long term planning and, as a result, cannot be used to support further financing from banks and other lenders.

³⁶ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/legislation-by-laws/AO-10.pdf>

³⁷ See <https://www.halifax.ca/business/doing-business-halifax/community-grants>

Housing and Homelessness Partnership: The Housing and Homelessness Partnership is a collaborative of nine partners from the three levels of government, the private sector and non-profit organizations in Halifax.³⁸ In October 2013, Regional Council endorsed HRM's formal participation with the Partnership. The Housing and Homelessness Partnership's Charter was formally signed in 2014, with the mandate to "end homelessness and housing poverty in Halifax" by addressing policy and systematic issues. The Partnership is organized around the Homelessness Working Group and Affordable Housing Working Group

Affordable housing targets: In December 2016, Regional Council endorsed the affordable housing targets established by the Housing and Homelessness Partnership. The targets include increasing the number of affordable units to 5,000, through new construction and the preservation and upgrades to existing units. In addition, the Halifax Economic Growth Plan encourages HRM's involvement in the Partnership and includes direction to increase the supply of non-market housing as a proportion of total HRM households.

Density bonusing: The *HRM Charter* enables the Municipality to use incentive or bonus zoning to allow an increase in built area in exchange for public amenities and/or benefits. While originally limited to downtown Halifax, in 2014, the Province extended HRM's ability to use of incentive or bonus zoning to the Centre Plan area. At the time, the Province also required that a portion of the bonus be provided in the form of affordable housing. More recently, in April 2018, the Province further amended *the HRM Charter* to enable the Municipality to use the density bonus tool in all areas of HRM. To date, incentive or bonus zoning has not been used outside of the downtown or in support of affordable housing due to several factors, including the lack of an administrative approach for calculating and monitoring affordable housing benefits.

In December 2016, Regional Council directed staff to develop an incentive or bonus zoning program for affordable housing benefits, including needed policies and planning document amendments and any required financial tools. This work is well underway and a proposed approach is contained in the Centre Plan draft Package A planning documents.

Policy and Regulatory Barriers:

In January 2018, Council initiated the process to amend planning documents to simplify, consolidate and remove barriers to the development of secondary suites. In August 2017, Council initiated the process to amend planning documents to simplify, consolidate and remove barriers to the development of special care facilities and assisted living.³⁹ Staff are currently reviewing land use regulations in other jurisdictions and consulting with stakeholders concerning secondary suites. Research and consultations relating to special care facilities and assisted living land has concluded and staff are currently drafting a recommendation report for Council.

Affordable housing work plan: In December 2016, Regional Council directed staff to develop a work plan to support the Housing and Homelessness Partnership's five-year affordable housing targets. Staff are currently developing a proposed Affordable Housing Work Plan and anticipate providing it to Council in Spring 2018.

³⁸ See <http://housingandhomelessness.ca/>

³⁹ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/170801rc-mins.pdf>

PART II RIGHT TO AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE

Consideration of permitting more "home-based" or neighbourhood day care centres in Municipal Planning Strategies and Land Use By-Laws.

Municipal planning strategies: The Regional Plan supports the development of complete communities including access to the goods, services and facilities needed by residents. Consistent with this direction, HRM's various municipal planning strategies (MPS) and land use by-laws(LUB) permit a variety of commercial land uses, including day cares. Large scale day cares are generally permitted with HRM's various commercial and mixed-use zoning, while home day cares, which are limited in scale, are generally permitted in zones that permit residential uses. However, due to the diverse origins of each LUB, there is a lack of consistency regarding regulations for home day cares. These diverse regulations demonstrate the need for the Planning and Development's Plan and By-law simplification efforts, which is aimed a created a more streamlined and consistent regulatory framework. This work is underway through the Centre Plan and other project work and home day cares are expected to be one of several topics reviewed.

Municipal facilities housing day cares: HRM currently houses childcare and day care programs within municipally owned buildings that are leased to outside entities. As well, the municipality currently offers play programs at many recreation centres (these are not structured day care services), as well as thousands of summer day camp spaces at significantly subsidized cost throughout HRM. As of writing this report, the following municipal facilities provide space for independently operated day care operations: Needham Recreation Centre, North Woodside Community Centre; Beaver Bank Kinsac Community Centre; Tallahassee Community Centre; South End Day Care; Crichton Community Centre.

Research and discussion paper: HRM's Parks and Recreation has sought expert advice and supporting research to identify and recommend best practices, applicable policies and potential opportunities relating to municipal support for childcare. The objective of this consulting project is to assist HRM's Parks and Recreation business unit with the assessment of current childcare offerings within municipal facilities

To advance this work the municipality issued an RFP⁴⁰ to secure the services of a consultant. The consultant will conduct a detailed jurisdictional scan and produce a discussion paper (including research analysis and deriving a set of recommendations that fit within the municipal mandate). The consultant's work will address the following:

- childcare services that are offered in other jurisdictions' municipally-owned facilities with similar legislative authority and mandate at the municipal level;
- whether continuing to make municipally-owned facilities available to child care operators at below-market rent is needed by the community;
- under-serviced areas (communities, neighbourhoods, etc.) within the municipality regarding childcare;
- policy options that HRM may consider given current and prospective legislative powers; and
- potential impacts on existing childcare providers within the municipality along with the recent impact of provincially offered pre-primary programs on the industry.

⁴⁰ See RFP no. 17-390, issued 12/29/2017.

PART III – RIGHT TO ACCESS HEALTHY FOOD

Food insecurity: One in seven Halifax households experience food insecurity, meaning they have difficulty accessing enough healthy food on a regular basis. People who experience food insecurity report having poor physical and mental health, as well as chronic health conditions. To enhance food security, healthy, culturally appropriate and sustainably produced food must be physically and economically available to all residents.

While low income is often the biggest barrier to healthy food access, this barrier is further compounded by living in neighbourhoods with few affordable healthy food retail options. Accessing healthy food can be particularly challenging for seniors, newcomers, low-income residents, people with disabilities and single parents with young children.

HRM has demonstrated a growing interest in role in the promotion of food security. The following list highlights recent municipal actions establishing this commitment:

- 2013 Mayor's Conversation on Healthy and Livable Communities emphasizing the need to address local food production and promotion, access to healthy food and increasing rates of obesity and chronic disease;
- Mar 2013 - Sep 2014 CLASP (Coalition Linking Action and Science for Prevention) Healthy Canada By Design partnership which focused on community food security. While the CLASP project has ended, the relationship between HRM Planning and Public Health continues with regular meetings of the Healthy Communities by Design Committee;
- 2014 Regional Plan objective to design communities that promote food security (3.1.5);
- 2014 to Present membership in the Halifax Food Policy Alliance;
- 2017/2018 Regional Council Priority Outcomes- "Community Health – Halifax shall be an active partner in supporting community health programs such as food security initiatives.";
- 2017/2018 Centre Plan documents which include policies and support for agriculture and food access;
- October 31, 2017 Regional Council adoption of the HRM Public Safety Strategy which highlights food insecurity as a risk factor in the provision of safe and secure environments; and
- Ongoing support for the Mobile Food Market (MFM)- 2016 Summer Pilot, the 2017 endorsements of continued support for a Winter Pilot and Year 2 Transition and longer-term support, as detailed below.

Mobile food markets: Mobile markets are an innovative approach to addressing food access issues and have been piloted in many North American cities. Mobile markets can also build capacity within and across communities. Through accessing healthy food, individuals and families also take part in shaping community based solutions to improve health and community well-being.

Halifax pilot projects: In May 2016, Halifax launched the Mobile Food Market (MFM)⁴¹ as a 21-week pilot project utilizing a Halifax Transit bus and operator to bring affordable produce to communities. Communities were selected based on criteria for increased risk of food insecurity and local interest and capacity to support the market. Produce was selected based on residents' preferences and sold at a discount. In November, 2016, a 16-week winter pilot was run to explore operating the MFM under winter conditions and help address food access issues which are amplified during the winter season.

⁴¹ The MFM project is a partnership between HRM, Public Health (Central Zone, NSHA), the Ecology Action Centre, Partners for Care and a variety of other supporting stakeholders. As a not for profit, social enterprise, all proceeds are directed back into the program.

MFM results: Public Health (Central Zone, Nova Scotia Health Authority) conducted extensive evaluations of the Summer and Winter Pilots. These evaluations were informed by sales data, interviews, focus groups and surveys with key project partners and MFM customers.⁴² The evaluations have been instrumental in determining how the MFM project can grow and adapt, based on a deeper understanding of what worked and what didn't work. The evaluations demonstrate that the MFM is effective in increasing access to and consumption of healthy foods as well as in creating a space for community connection and promotion of wellbeing. HRM's Mobile Food Market is an example of the impact and effectiveness of multiple organizations with different resources and skill sets working together to address a challenge. This partnership has been recognized nationally, winning silver in 2018 at the Institute of Public Administration of Canada/Deloitte Public Sector Leadership Awards for its innovative, collaborative approach to addressing food insecurity.

MFM transition year and beyond: In January 2017 Regional Council approved a further extension to the municipality's in-kind contribution of the use of a vehicle and other supports to enable a transition year for the Mobile Food Market (June 2017 to April 2018).⁴³ Council also directed staff to explore further options to support the long-term viability of the Mobile Food Market, including continuing to provide in-kind supports, and/or permanently conveying a surplus bus to the Mobile Food Market. In April 2018, Council will be considering a report proposing continued in-kind support for the next three years (2018/19 to 2020/21).

Back to Our Roots urban farm market: In May 2017 Regional Council directed staff to prepare an agreement with Back to Our Roots (BTOR) Urban Farm to permit the operation of a small-scale market, at the Woodside Ferry Terminal.⁴⁴ BTOR Urban Farm uses gardening to promote physical, mental and environmental health by offering skills training and educational workshops on growing vegetables sustainably, making healthy food more accessible to hospital patients/clients and staff, and creating a space for gardening that's supportive and welcoming. The market stall operated once-per-week during the summer and fall of 2017. The re-location of the market helped to improve access to fresh, sustainable, and locally grown produce.⁴⁵

Community Gardens: Since the program began in 2008, community gardens on municipal properties have flourished with 20 gardens to date and many more thriving on privately owned land. HRM's program offers residents the opportunity to operate a community garden on municipally owned land. These gardens are operated by non-profit societies for one or more of the following purposes:

- Growing produce for: (a) personal consumption; (b) donating to local food causes; (c) generating revenue to reinvest in the community garden;
- Production of a floral or landscape display;
- Demonstration gardening or other related instructional programming.

Community gardens can include vegetables, fruit, herbs, flowers, native and/or ornamental plants and are established and operated within existing municipal regulations, bylaws and assessments. A community garden must have a "common area" with shared upkeep and may include individual garden plots. Community gardening differs from urban agriculture (urban farms), which is an industry that produces agricultural products for distribution to local markets. Community gardens are subject to Community

⁴² See

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/570ff97f9f7266ad995fde2a/t/58e7a1101b631b9312f756b4/1491575088890/MFM_EvaluationReport_SummerFall_07April2017.pdf

⁴³ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/170124rc171.pdf> and <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/170124rc-mins.pdf>

⁴⁴ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/170509rc1433.pdf> and <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/170509rc-mins.pdf>

⁴⁵ The Back to Our Roots Urban Farm is located within the grounds of the neighbouring hospital and the market is run by staff and volunteers from the hospital as a Nova Scotia Health Authority initiative.

Garden Program" Administrative Order (2014-009-OP).⁴⁶ To better support the creation of community gardens, municipal staff created a handbook that sets out the rules and procedures for establishing a community garden on municipal property.⁴⁷

Urban Orchards:⁴⁸ On September 25, 2012, Halifax Regional Council adopted the Urban Forest Master Plan which lays out guiding principles to help ensure the ongoing sustainability of the municipality's urban forest.⁴⁹ The overall goal of the Urban Forest Master Plan is to ensure a sustainable future for our urban forest. In 2013, the Mayor's Conversation on Healthy and Livable Communities was a catalyst for the development of urban orchards and emphasized the importance of local food.

Residential components of the Urban Forest Master Plan are ongoing including education and planting. The Urban Forest Masterplan encourages the use of edible plants and development of urban orchards. This direction was further supported by the Mayor's conversation which was a catalyst for the development of HRM's first Urban Orchard on the Dartmouth Commons. The UFM is continuing to explore opportunities for additional urban orchards and edible planting.

The Halifax Food Policy Alliance (HFPA): The Halifax Food Policy Alliance (HFPA) was formed in 2013 as a partnership of individuals and organizations representing various facets of the food system.⁵⁰ HFPA has been working closely with the Halifax Regional Municipality and other stakeholders to foster a healthy, just and sustainable food system in the Halifax region. HRM staff have been part of the HFPA Steering Committee since its inception in 2013.

Food Counts (2015): Food Counts is the first report of its kind for Halifax, representing a snapshot of the current state of the food system in the region. HFPA released the report in June 2015 and it serves as a benchmark report to inform policies and actions in building a healthy, just and sustainable food system for Halifax.⁵¹

Food Charter and Strategy: A food charter is a shared vision statement of values and goals for a region's food system.⁵² Governance of the food system—from production through processing and distribution to consumption and waste management of food—is complex, involving the work and collaboration of many people, organizations, governments and communities. A food strategy builds on the vision of a charter to create the partnerships, strategies, policies, programs and regulations to support a healthy, just and sustainable food system.

Draft Halifax Food Charter: The HFPA has developed a draft Food Charter which can be used to guide the development of a more comprehensive food strategy for the Halifax Region.⁵³ Multiple public consultations and an online survey were used to gather input on the draft. Work on the draft food charter

⁴⁶ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/legislation-by-laws/AO-2014-009-OP.pdf>

⁴⁷ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/recreation/parks-trails-gardens/CommunityGardenHandbook2017.pdf>

⁴⁸ An urban orchard can be defined as a grouping of trees or bushes that produce fruits and nuts and which is cared for by a community, rather than run for private profit.

⁴⁹ The multiyear community engagement process and research initiatives that led to the development of the Plan resulted in an integrated social, ecological, and economic strategy.

⁵⁰ See <https://halifaxfoodpolicy.ca/>

⁵¹ See <https://halifaxfoodpolicy.files.wordpress.com/2015/03/foodcounts-assessment-web-fin4.pdf>

⁵² Many cities throughout Canada have developed food charters and food strategies to provide a road map for local governments and communities to integrate food systems issues into a single framework. Some examples include Vancouver, Saskatoon, Toronto, Thunder Bay and Waterloo.

⁵³ Food charters sometimes contain broad outcomes or priorities, but they are generally intended as a starting point and as a guide for developing the actions necessary for good food system governance.

and how to translate this into a Halifax Food Strategy is ongoing at the time of this report.

HRM recognized the importance of its relationship with the HFPA and the municipal role in the promotion of food security with a May 2017 motion calling for a staff report on options for formalizing the relationship with the HFPA, working together towards the creation of a Food Charter and Food Strategy, exploring the opportunities, barriers and enablers for food security within the municipal body and the development of a study identifying vulnerable communities and mapping existing assets. This report is anticipated to be before Council in the Summer of 2018.

PART IV – THE RIGHT TO SAFETY

Ensure the Integrated Halifax Regional Police / RCMP continue Community Officers presence in the schools / communities and the School Crossing Guard Program; Traffic: ensure pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalk/crosswalk) is adequate especially in elementary school districts.

A. Community officer presence in schools

The School Response Officer (SRO) function: HRP has a longstanding relationship with local schools dating back to well before amalgamation. SRO's are the primary police responders and investigators for most incidents and calls for service occurring at schools. They are liaisons and partners with school administrators, students, parents and service providers in addressing a variety of school and related community issues and they also deliver crime prevention education programming on behalf of HRP. Currently, SRO's interact with approximately seventy HRSB schools, four CSAP schools and a dozen private schools all in the jurisdiction of HRP.

The original goals for the SRO program were to help to decrease crime through education while developing a positive working relationship with youth in the region. Presentations were developed with the assistance of HRSB staff for each grade level from primary to grade twelve, and HRP strived to ensure that each classroom received at least one pro-active program presentation per school year. Delivery of presentations however would quickly become a secondary function. Response to a variety of calls for service and the undertaking of criminal investigations particularly at the high school and junior high levels became and continues to be the priority work of an SRO. Most of the high schools have provided dedicated office space for their assigned SRO.

The HRP SRO's are on the front line of interagency collaboration to support youth and their families in need. They develop expertise in the provisions of the YCJA and are entrusted to make individual decisions on a wide variety of issues including child custody and abuse cases, drug matters and weapons calls. These members are also responsible for staffing the HRP Bully Hotline every day of the year. When school is not in session, they assist with events such as parades, rodeos, HRP Sports Pals and Camp Courage, and engage in proactive patrol work including bicycle patrols.

Currently, very few pro-active presentations occur. Schools are reflective of the communities they serve and a longstanding variety of assaults, disputes, drugs, thefts and mental health issues continue to be handled by our SRO's. They are also confronting increasing calls in the evolving areas of cyber-bullying, sexting, and internet related extortion.

SRO staffing levels: HRP's SRO compliment began with six dedicated Constables. Each officer was assigned responsibility for an HRSB family of schools (which included a high school and the related feeder junior high and elementary schools). Considering increasing workloads and evolving internet related concerns for youth, four additional SRO's were added to the HRP compliment in 2008. In August of 2011 two SRO positions were converted to create positions in the newly formed Integrated Guns and Gangs Unit reducing the SRO compliment to eight. In 2012 the SRO compliment was further reduced to seven SRO's and dispersal of these members has since returned to the original six HRSB family of school assignments, with one bilingual member handling the CSAP schools.

B. Communities and the school crossing guard program

School crossing guard program: The administration of the School Crossing Guard Program currently falls within the mandate of Halifax Regional Police. Under the direction of Police school crossing guards both full and part time stand guard over crosswalks near schools across HRM. Crossing guards who work regular part-time belong to the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and are offered a range of benefits as well as an attendance bonus. Candidates must meet the security clearance requirements administered by Halifax Regional Police. Training of crossing guards is conducted annually.

Crossing guards' duties and responsibilities include the following:

- safely escort elementary school children across busy crosswalks throughout HRM;
- enforce all policies and procedures in the operation of the crosswalk;
- abide by all laws dealing with pedestrian traffic at the crosswalk; and
- report any problems or safety concerns arising at the assigned crosswalk to the supervisor or program manager.

Staffing criteria for crossing guards: In September, 2014 the Board of Police Commissioners passed a motion directing a review of the staffing criteria for crossing guards. Following analysis of the Transportation Association of Canada Pedestrian Crossing Control Guide (TAC Guide), staff conducted a jurisdictional survey.⁵⁴ The way jurisdictions assessed staffing varied greatly, with some using complicated formulae to determine risk exposure and others using simple minimum volumes combined with collision histories and other environmental considerations. Although HRM's crossing guard staffing criteria were not considered deficient, staff recommended changes to better align with other jurisdictions and with the TAC Guide.⁵⁵

In December 2014, the following criteria were adopted by the Police Board for the staffing of crosswalks:⁵⁶

- Utilization in relation to elementary schools and their students;
- A minimum of 10 students and 200 vehicles during peak hour (this would be independent of other factors);
- Elimination of gap analysis (if minimum volumes are met, the crosswalk will be staffed regardless of the number of gaps);
- Collision history of greater than 1 collision per year over last three years (where the actions of a crossing guard may have prevented same);
- Traffic speeds, understanding that no crossing guard will be placed at any location with a speed limit of higher than 60 km/hr;
- Geographical conditions (number of traffic lanes, visibility of intersection, etc.); and
- Input from Traffic Management

C. Pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalk/crosswalk)

Strategic Road Safety Plan (SRSP): Transportation and Public Works' 2016/17 Business Plan includes the development of a Strategic Road Safety Plan (SRSP). The SRSP will set out safety goals, objectives and action plans to guide the municipality (and its road safety partners) in creating safer roads for all road users and reducing the number of collisions, road fatalities and injuries.⁵⁷ The SRSP is intended to reduce fatal/injury collisions for all road users.

The SRSP project kicked off in March 2017, once a consultant (CIMA+) was selected. Stakeholders participated in SRSP workshops held in June 2017 and August 2017. The consultant also conducted a comprehensive cross-jurisdictional review and developed a public opinion survey.⁵⁸ Collision data was

⁵⁴ While the TAC Guide did outline a set of criteria for employing a crossing guard, including; pedestrian age, street width, vehicular speeds, sight distance, safe gaps, collision history, and general observations, it did not outline recommended vehicular and pedestrian minimums.

⁵⁵ See <http://legacycontent.halifax.ca/boardscom/bpc/documents/141208bopc818.pdf>

⁵⁶ See <http://legacycontent.halifax.ca/boardscom/bpc/documents/141208bopc.pdf>

⁵⁷ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/standing-committees/171207tscINFO2.pdf>

⁵⁸ The survey was administered by HRM Corporate Communications. The results of the public opinion survey were analyzed to identify potential emphasis areas.

analyzed to identify potential emphasis areas (see below).⁵⁹ The data analysis included collision severity, impact type, location, age, road condition, driver action/behaviour, restraint usage, and driver condition (impaired/distracted). The results of the public opinion survey were used to verify the emphasis areas chosen. Emphasis areas are overlapping, in that collisions analyzed may involve multiple emphasis areas (although action plans will be targeted at specific emphasis areas).

The SRSP project's completion is anticipated in Summer 2018. As reported to Regional Council in December 2017, provisional SRSP vision, goal, and emphasis areas have been identified as follows:⁶⁰

- **Vision:** Moving towards zero fatalities and injuries for people using any mode of transportation.
- **Goal:** 15% reduction of fatal and injury collisions within five years (2018-2023).
- **Emphasis Areas:** (1) intersection related collisions; (2) young demographic; (3) pedestrian collisions; (4) aggressive driving; (5) distracted driving; (6) impaired driving; and (7) bicyclist collisions.

Countermeasures: A countermeasure refers to an engineering, education or enforcement treatment or strategy designed to reduce the occurrence or severity of collisions. HRM is currently working with partners (including multiple municipal business units, the Province, police, and advocacy groups) to develop countermeasures.⁶¹ The implementation of the SRSP will be data driven; collision data will be used to identify priority locations or driver behaviours and countermeasures will be selected based on the data.

Youth-pedestrian-safety related countermeasures currently under consideration include the following:

- **Sidewalk modifications:** Ensure sidewalks, crosswalks, and transit stops are aligned and connected.
- **Skills and safety training programs for teenagers and young adults:** Develop relationship with school boards and post-secondary institutions to promote active transportation, supporting skills and safety training programs for teenagers and young adults.
- **School Travel Planning (STP) and active and safe routes to school:** Support community-based initiatives that promote active, safe, sustainable transportation for the daily commute to school (including the walking school bus approach).⁶² Bring together community stakeholders at each school to identify travel issues faced by staff and students and initiate a discussion on possible solutions.
- **Expanded traffic safety curriculum:** Promote enhanced curriculum support and in-school traffic safety education/training in curriculum for elementary and high schools as well as university/colleges. Focus on distraction, intersections, crossing at mid-block, rules of the road, and right-of-

⁵⁹ An emphasis area is a highest priority area with opportunities to improve safety from a technical, political and social perspective.

⁶⁰ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/standing-committees/171207tscINFO2.pdf>

⁶¹ Countermeasures provided by CIMA+ came from both scientific reporting agencies that maintain databases of action items and from actions chosen by other similar jurisdictions. Countermeasures are chosen based on the likelihood of success and the ability of HRM and/or partner agencies to deliver the action.

⁶² A walking school bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. See <http://www.walkingschoolbus.org/>

way.

- **Complete streets principles:** Adopt 'complete streets' guiding principles, giving walking, bicycling, and transit priority when allocating road right-of-way.⁶³
- **Design treatments:** Improve pedestrian safety through design treatments including visual/sensory cues, bump outs, or traffic calming, where appropriate.

Among the prospective countermeasures listed above, some are current programs and others are items that may be implemented. The future/proposed countermeasures are items that a lead agency has committed to implementing, if the collision data suggests a need.

Crosswalk Treatments: As part of an on-going commitment to identify measures to effectively improve visibility and safety at crosswalks, staff implemented two new treatments in 2017 for testing; rectangular rapid flashing beacons and fluorescent yellow-green crosswalk signs. The rectangular rapid flashing beacons are pedestrian activated beacons that are installed just above the standard crosswalk signs at marked crosswalks. Staff reported on the results of these crosswalk treatment pilots in December of 2017.⁶⁴ As of the writing of this report, staff continue to pilot a variety of crosswalk treatments for visibility and yielding.

⁶³ The Regional Municipal Planning Strategy (2014) states that one of its objectives is to design complete streets. Complete streets are safe, comfortable and enjoyable for all ages, modes and abilities in all seasons. Complete streets are also sensitive to the character, scale and needs of adjacent neighbourhoods and contribute to the long-term vision for communities.

⁶⁴ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/171212rc1412.pdf> and <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/171212rc-mins.pdf>

PART V: THE RIGHT TO SAFE POTABLE WATER

Work with Halifax Regional Water Commission by developing options to assist families in danger of having water services cut.

Help to Others (H2O) Fund: The Help to Others (H2O) Fund is a water, wastewater, and storm-water assistance fund that can be used by Halifax Water residential customers who are having a hard time making their bill payments. Approved applicants receive assistance once in a 24-month period to a maximum of \$250.00.

The program is funded by Halifax Water and its employees and administered by The Salvation Army. Halifax Water funds the program in the amount of \$25,000 annually. Halifax Water employees have also put together an employee sponsored fund. Funds donated by Halifax Water employees are matched by Halifax Water to a maximum of \$25,000 annually. Therefore, the potential annual assistance that the fund could provide is \$75,000.

The H2O Fund is not a rebate program. It is intended to assist households in an emergency, especially those with no other resources available. To qualify for the H2O Fund, residents must meet the following conditions:

- The household is low income and in an emergency.
- The Halifax Water account is active and in the name of an adult living in the household (the account cannot be in the landlord's name).
- The household and household members have not received H2O Fund assistance within the last 24 months.

Residents are not eligible to receive assistance if their residential water, wastewater, and storm-water costs are included in their rent.

To apply, residents complete and submit the H2O Fund application along with the required supporting documents.⁶⁵ If a resident cannot download the application PDF, they can pick up a hard copy of the application at these locations: (a) Halifax Water's 450 Cowie Hill Rd. office; (b) Salvation Army's Gottingen St. location; (c) any HRM Customer Services Centre.

In addition to a completed application form, residents are required to provide the following:

- A copy of a recent (within the past two months) Halifax Water bill, showing their name, address, account number, and the amount owing.
- Declaration of income or of no income, or proof of study, to demonstrate financial need.

Declaration of income must include all sources of income, including (but not limited to): wages; employment insurance; worker's compensation; income assistance; child tax benefits; child support old age security. Declaration of no income must come in the form of a letter of support from a community referrer, such as: local food bank; church; social worker; physician; law enforcement; or Member of the Legislative Assembly. Adults enrolled in an educational or training program need to submit a copy of their student ID or a letter from the school or training facility.

The Salvation Army receives and reviews all completed applications and contacts residents within five business days to let them know if they are eligible for support. If a resident's application is approved, the funds are applied directly to the applicant's Halifax Water account.

⁶⁵ See https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/home-property/water/2017-2018_H2O-Fund-Cover-Letter-Application.pdf

Halifax Water is currently in the process of enhancing the H2O program. Changes to the program criteria are being made to make the program easier for applicants to understand, to simplify the application process and to make the program accessible to more customers. Halifax Water anticipates having the changes implemented in early Spring of 2018.

PART VI: THE RIGHT TO RECREATION AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Continue to offer affordable recreation activities for all; consider expanding the Inclusion Program as required; ensure Community Space is included in all developments; Continue Active Transportation and Integrated Mobility Plan and trail development to ensure healthy/active living options for families.

HRM Parks and Recreation is committed to providing safe and accessible services and activities for all persons. Persons with special needs are welcome to attend any recreation activity compatible with their interests, abilities and needs. Inclusion is viewed as a partnership between HRM staff and families.

Universal and targeted approaches: Parks and Recreation fosters access and inclusion through both targeted and universal approaches. Universal access refers to a broad range of opportunities that are reasonably accessible to as many people as possible. Examples of universal access includes free skating, equipment loan programs, access to parks, and open gyms. Targeted approaches include strategies for segments of the population who face increased barriers to participation. Examples of targeted approaches include providing supports for newcomers, individuals with disabilities, LGBTQ2 and outreach to marginalized communities.

Program support and adaptations: Parks and Recreation makes all reasonable efforts to provide program supports and adaptations necessary to assist individuals who may face physical, sensory, cognitive challenges; language barriers; or other challenges to participate in recreation. Examples include assisting with communication, personal care, safety, mobility, language support and modifications to recreation programs and services to enable participation. Staff meets family and individuals prior to the start of the program to identify appropriate program options and supports required to assist the participant.⁶⁶

Welcoming spaces: Parks and Recreation provides many facilities, parks and outdoor spaces. Their community spaces are valued and they foster a sense of belonging. Welcoming community spaces refers to accessible design for participation; increasing connectivity; equitable facility scheduling; friendly, trained and knowledgeable staff; cultural considerations in program development, and a diverse workforce that is reflective of the community.

Affordability: Parks and Recreation is committed to providing affordable programs and services. Examples include developing equitable fee structures for those who face financial barriers, providing free play spaces (i.e. playgrounds, splash pads) in low-income areas, developing equitable rental policies, program funding support and strategies to increase community access in unused facility space.⁶⁷ Individuals are eligible for support for one program per season, pertaining to Fall/Winter/Spring seasons (please note that some programs may be excluded). During the summer months, additional financial support may be requested to enable children/youth to attend summer camps/programs.

Training and Development: Parks and Recreation values ongoing training and development to ensure that staff, students, volunteers have the most current knowledge and skills necessary to provide service excellence in access and inclusion.

⁶⁶ Inclusion-related information exchange (between staff and residents) is facilitated through a participant information form, an inclusion support information form, and an administration of medication and health care form. See <https://www.halifax.ca/recreation/programs-activities/programs-registration>

⁶⁷ Residents can apply for funding support by submitting a funding access form. See https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/recreation/programs-activities/FundingAccessApplication2017_0.pdf

Resource guide: The Playbook resource guide was developed by Parks and Recreation, to provide helpful information about sport and recreation opportunities for individuals with disabilities.⁶⁸ The Playbook is also a resource for service providers in helping offer a variety of options for all Nova Scotians.

Community access and inclusion strategy: Staff have developed a Community Access and Inclusion Strategy that will apply to all sections of Parks and Recreation. The purpose of the strategy is to provide guidance and direction to Park and Recreation staff, volunteers, stakeholders and partners to ensure that everyone has the opportunity, to participate in programs and services. The strategy will be used to guide the development of operational policies and procedures, planning processes, and program development and delivery.

⁶⁸ See <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/recreation/programs-activities/InclusivityPlayBook2017.pdf>

Attachment 2 Canadian municipal children's charters

Campbell River (British Columbia) | 2015

<http://www.crfamilynetwork.ca/campbell-river-childrens-charter>



Campbell River Children's Charter

Our community has the responsibility to....

- Provide experiences for children to learn and grow.
- Allow abundant opportunities to play .
- Provide ample access to nature.
- Honour each child as being unique.
- Support diversity to allow children to grow into who they are.
- Allow children to be heard, to question, and to make mistakes.
- Meet the essential needs of children and their families for a healthy life.
- Support families to create loving homes.
- Protect children and their families from harm.

Across Campbell River, 315 children from the ages of 3 to 12 years old shared, through words and drawings, their opinions on children's rights in Campbell River.

This poster is Children Approved.

Kamloops (British Columbia) | Adopted in 2010

<http://makechildrenfirst.ca/about/kamloops-childrens-charter-rights/summary-process/>



In the words of our youth...

1 **The right to basic needs** Healthy food, clothing, sleep, clean water and access to technology.

2 **The right to make friends and freely meet in groups** To build social skills and be with like-minded people our own age.

3 **The right to religion, culture and beliefs** To have positive role models who practice their traditions - to accept our differences and live in a tolerant community.

4 **The right to privacy** To have our own space, to think and collect our thoughts.

5 **The right to justice, protection and treatment** To live in a community with good leaders and adults who show they really care. We should be given a chance to be trusted.

6 **The right to education** To have opportunities and encouragement to develop our potential, to have a good life and provide for ourselves.

7 **The right to a caring home environment** To be a part of a family who we can rely on, to feel safe and secure at home and have dinner with our family on Sundays.

8 **The right to be heard** To voice our opinion, speak our mind and have people in our lives who value what we say.

9 **The right to an identity** To love being "me".

10 **The right to peace** People want peace, and you can make peace when you believe.

11 **The right to equal access** No one is more important than anyone else and we should all have opportunities to do many things.

12 **The right to play** To feel good, let loose and be free. To still be a kid!



KAMLOOPS children's charter of rights In the words of our children...

1 The right to basic needs Every child has the right to a home, clothing, nutritious food, clean air and water; to be loved, to sleep and have stuffies to cuddle with.

2 The right to make friends and freely meet in groups Every child has the right to have fun with friends - together we learn how to make friends, share, and know that it is okay to be ourselves.

3 The right to religion, culture and beliefs Every child has the right to learn acceptance, tolerance and to walk a path of our own.

4 The right to privacy Every child has the right to be alone, to have time for thinking and a spot to call "mine."

5 The right to justice, protection and treatment Every child has the right to live without fear knowing we will be safe - someone to protect us from spiders.

6 The right to education Every child has the right to learn how to read and write, and know what is going on in the world.

7 The right to a caring home environment Every child has the right to have someone to care for us, feed us, tuck us into bed, say "I love you" and try to give us a happy life.

8 The right to be heard Every child has the right to express themselves without being criticized, to make choices, ask questions and state an opinion - adults should respect that.

9 The right to an identity Every child has the right to learn and feel good about themselves, to have hope and wonder.

10 The right to peace Every child has the right to participate in peaceful gatherings and the freedom to love and be friends.

11 The right to equal access Every child has the right to be treated with the same love, care, respect and kindness - to not be treated differently because we are children.

12 The right to play Every child has the right to play in the rain and build a waterfall in the backyard.

Lambton County (Ontario) | Adopted in 2009

<https://www.lambtononline.ca/HOME/RESIDENTS/SOCIALPLANNING/Pages/BestStart.aspx>

New Westminster (British Columbia) | Adopted in 2010

New Westminster Children's Charter

This Charter sets out a vision for our children. It is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have a duty to support families so that all children can be healthy, safe and participate fully in community life.

Right to Healthy Development: a quality of life that supports their diverse physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and social development.

- ♥ All children require access to appropriate health care
- ♥ All children require high quality early childhood development opportunities and responsive primary and secondary education
- ♥ All children require access to quality child care
- ♥ All children require quality time with their families and other nurturing and positive role models
- ♥ All children require nutritious food, a healthy environment and a safe and comfortable place to live



Right to Be Safe: protection from physical, psychological and emotional harm.

- ♥ All children need a caring home environment
- ♥ All children need to live in safe, accessible neighbourhoods
- ♥ All children need protection from neglect, abuse and exploitation
- ♥ All children need the community to maintain a natural, healthy and sustainable environment

Right to Participation: a childhood with dignity and respect that allows all children to reach their full potential.

- ♥ All children need to participate in activities irrespective of ability, income, ethnicity, culture, spiritual and/or religious identity
- ♥ All children need to engage in play-based activities that promote creative expression and skill development
- ♥ All children need access to developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant programs that build confidence, communication skills and enthusiasm
- ♥ All children have the right to be a child: to play, to be happy, to have a voice and to be heard



www.kidsnewwest.ca

The New Westminster Children's Charter was developed by Understanding the Early Years (UEY) New Westminster. UEY New Westminster is hosted by the Lower Mainland Purpose Society. UEY New Westminster is funded by the Government of Canada's Understanding the Early Years Initiative.



Niagara Region (Ontario) | 2002

<http://www.niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/resources-publications/niagara-childrens-charter-of-rights/>

N I A G A R A C H I L D R

Children, like other human beings, are entitled to fundamental rights and freedoms. Because of children's unique vulnerability, it is the responsibility of adults to ensure not only that children are safe from exploitation and neglect, but that they have access to a fair share of society's resources.

The preamble of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that "...the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community..."¹ While parents have the primary responsibility for their children's care and upbringing, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child makes it clear that governments have a duty to help families fulfill their responsibility and to protect the rights of children. Niagara's Children's Charter situates the provisions of the Convention in a local context.

This Charter is not intended to replace or pre-empt requirements under varying sources of legislation related to children. It constitutes a statement of principles rather than a legally binding document. The Children's Charter consolidates elements related to the fundamental rights of children from birth to eighteen years of age in one document.

When our children's fundamental needs are met, they are better able to meaningfully contribute towards creating a civic community. This Charter represents Niagara's commitment to our future. To this end, all measures undertaken by communities within Niagara will ensure the fundamental rights and freedoms of our children.

All Niagara's children should have:

- Healthy food, safe water, and clean air.
- Housing in dwellings that reflects the normal standard of our community.
- Healthy physical, intellectual, emotional and social development, well being and quality of life.
- Protection from physical, psychological and sexual abuse both in and out of the home.
- Time with their families and/or other nurturing and positive role models throughout their childhood.
- High quality early child development opportunities to meet their best interests.
- Resources to achieve the highest attainable level of health and the assurance that the resources necessary to ensure lifelong good health are provided.
- Primary and secondary education to enable them to reach their full potential.
- Recreational and leisure activities in the form of play, creative expression and skill development opportunities.
- Protection from racism and discrimination irrespective of the child's ethnic, cultural, spiritual, and/or religious identity.

October 2003

¹ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, November 20, 1989, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1991, page 1.



We as children believe that we should have the rights and freedoms as other human beings. Because children tend to be more naive, it is the adults' responsibility to make sure that we are not taken advantage of or ignored. It is also the adults' responsibility to make sure we have access to a fair share of our community's resources.

While parents must raise and care for their children, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child makes it clear that the government must also help the families to carry out their responsibility of protecting the child's rights and caring for him/her.

When a community decides to make this Charter one of their own, they will ensure the rights and freedoms of Niagara's children without discrimination.

All children of Niagara are entitled to:

- Have food, shelter and time with our friends so we can develop physically, emotionally and intellectually, while also developing our well-being and a good quality of life.
- Have the right to live in a good home.
- Proper health care so that we can remain strong and healthy.
- The right to feel safe and protected from physical, psychological and sexual abuse everywhere and anywhere we might go.
- Spend time with our family and have a proper role model present throughout our childhood.
- Take part in high quality child care and early school programs made to meet our best interests.
- Have a portion of the government's money spent towards us so we can live in a fun and safe community.
- Receive the schooling needed to reach our full capabilities.
- Have the opportunity to participate in extra curricular activities that allow us to be creative and express ourselves.
- The right to be who we are and believe what we want without being discriminated against.

— Victoria Krikorian and Chelsea Bolger, Denis Morris Catholic Secondary School,
and Nicole Burnett, E. L. Crasley Secondary School
November 2002

E N ' S C H A R T E R

Children should have basic rights and freedoms. Because children are young, adults have to look out for us and make sure we are safe. It is also the adults' responsibility to make sure the community's resources are available to us.

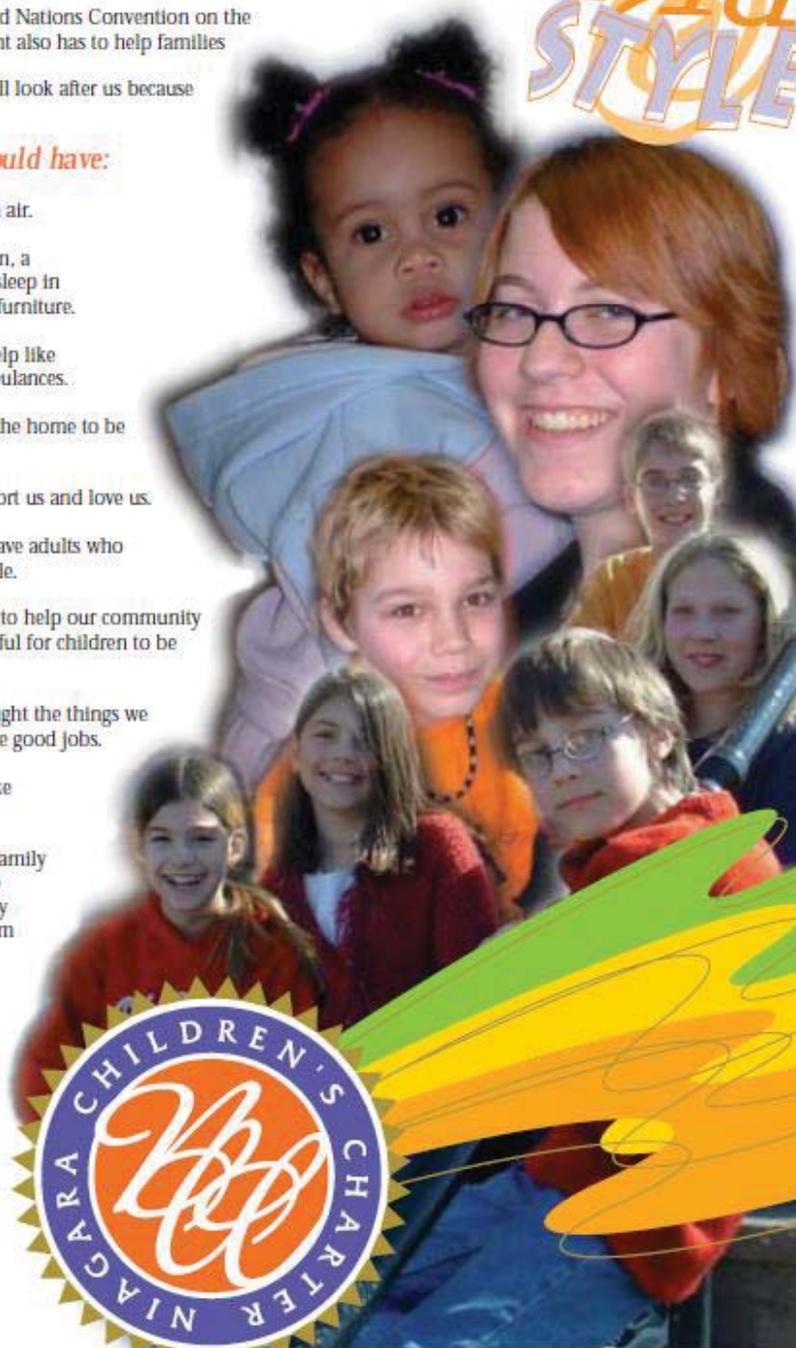
While parents care for us, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says the government also has to help families protect the rights of their kids.

This Charter means that Niagara will look after us because we will be the leaders of the future.

*Kid
STYLE*

We, the kids of Niagara, should have:

- Healthy food, clean water and clean air.
- A strongly built house with a kitchen, a bathroom, bedrooms with beds to sleep in and other rooms with comfortable furniture.
- A good doctor and good medical help like specialists, nurses, dentists and ambulances.
- The right both at home and out of the home to be protected from harm.
- A family to always care for us, support us and love us.
- Child care where we feel safe and have adults who encourage us and set a good example.
- A government that provides money to help our community be safe, clean, successful and beautiful for children to be our very best.
- The right to go to school and be taught the things we need to be good citizens and to have good jobs.
- The chance to play sports and to take lessons to develop good skills.
- The right to worship and keep our family traditions and never be forced to go against our beliefs and a community that lets children grow up in freedom and peace.



— Mrs. Scott's Grade 4 Class,
Vinsland Public School
December 2002

Peel Region (ON) | Adopted in 2006

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/success-by-6-peel-celebrates-national-child-day-with-special-delivery-tonewborns-at-peel-regional-hospitals-546383042.html>

IN THE WORDS OF THE CHILDREN...

1. The Right to Basic Needs Every child has the right to have clean water, good food, proper clothes, a home and be happy. **2. The Right to Make Friends and Freely Meet in Groups** Every child has the right to play together, have fun, make friends. The way to have a friend is to be one! **3. The Right to Religion, Culture and Beliefs** Every child has the right to be treated the same way in every country and not be treated differently because of the colour of their skin. Every child has the right to choose their own faith. **4. The Right to Privacy** Every child has the right to peace and quiet and have their own privacy from different people who bother you or from the internet. **5. The Right to Justice, Protection and Treatment** Every child has the right to have a safe place to live. They need to be able to live without fear. **6. The Right to Education** Every child has the right to learn even if it is in a special class. **7. The Right to a Caring Home Environment** Every child has the right to love. **8. The Right to Be Heard** Every child has the right to be respected, speak freely or give an honest opinion. **9. The Right to an Identity** Every child has the right to have their own name and nationality. Every child can show who they are. **10. The Right to Peace** Every child has the right to have a happy life where they can live in peace. **11. The Right to Equal Access** Every child has the right to have special care and training because it doesn't matter what skin colour or race or if they have any sickness or disability. **12. The Right to Play** Every child has the right to play and have fun. To have dancing flowers and magic mud.



Prince Albert (Saskatchewan) | Adopted in 2011

<http://panow.com/article/153641/children-s-charter-launched-prince-albert>



PRINCE ALBERT Children's Charter

This Charter applies the wisdom and commitment of our community to respectfully and holistically support our children socially, physically, intellectually, creatively and emotionally and that they shall have:

THE RIGHT TO HAVE BASIC NEEDS MET

- in a safe, stable, secure environment with access to quality housing and care, sufficient, safe nutritious food and clean drinking water and access to community services and supports.

THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE

- in a community committed to freedom and peace and in a supportive home environment, free from neglect, bullying, racism and exploitation, with the opportunity for exploration and recreation where they can grow and reach their full potential.

THE RIGHT TO BE THEMSELVES

- to be proud of who they are, to have a sense of belonging, to be appreciated for who they are, the same and yet different from everyone else.

THE RIGHT TO BELONG

- in a community that responds, embraces and accepts them and in a family unit that advocates for them and makes them feel secure and comfortable.

THE RIGHT TO LOVING RELATIONSHIPS

- with a family and community who does their best to support their spiritual, physical, mental, emotional and intellectual growth and with the support of at least one adult who believes in their hopes and dreams.

THE RIGHT TO LIFELONG LEARNING

- within a family and community that supports early experiences that provide a strong foundation and readiness for quality education, that will develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest.

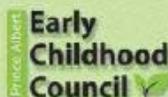
THE RIGHT TO PLAY AND BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

- to experience play as the work of childhood and to be offered opportunities that are artistic, cultural, affordable and accessible to all.

THE RIGHT TO CONTRIBUTE

- to have a voice and to know they are seen, heard, respected, cared for and treated with dignity.

Presented by:



November 2011

Regina (Saskatchewan) | Adopted in 2010

<http://www.reginakids.ca/regina-childrens-initiative/about-us/regina-childrens-charter>

REGINA CHILDREN'S CHARTER

The right to have your basic needs met
The right to be safe
The right to be you
The right to belong
The right to a loving relationship
The right to lifelong learning
The right to play and be physically active
The right to contribute



REGINA
Children's
Initiative

Strong beginnings. Brighter future.

RCI is committed to building a network of community support for the emotional, intellectual, spiritual and physical well being of children.

To find out more, please visit www.reginakids.ca

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



RRIC
Regina Regional
Intersectoral Committee

REGINA CHILDREN'S CHARTER



This Charter applies the wisdom and commitment of our community to respect and holistically support children emotionally, intellectually, spiritually, and physically.

The right to have basic needs met

- in a safe, stable, secure environment,
- with access to quality housing and care,
- with access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food and clean drinking water,
- with access to services and supports including quality health and dental care.

The right to be safe

- in a community committed to freedom and peace,
- in a home with a supportive family circle, free from neglect, bullying, racism, and exploitation,
- with the opportunity for exploration, risk taking, and recreation.

The right to be you

- to be proud of who you are; your cultural identity, religious beliefs, abilities, and individual values,
- to have a sense of belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity,
- to be appreciated for who you are, the same and yet different from everyone else,
- to be free to express your feelings.

The right to belong

- in a community that responds, embraces, and accepts you,
- in a family that advocates for you and makes you feel secure and comfortable,
- to feel included, useful, and needed.

The right to loving relationships

- with a nurturing parent/caregiver who provides guidance and is connected to supportive family and friends,
- with at least one adult who believes in your hopes and dreams,
- with a family who does their best to support your spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, and intellectual growth.

The right to lifelong learning

- within a family that accesses play resources to build an excitement for learning,
- through early experiences that provide a strong foundation and readiness for formal education,
- through a quality education, inclusive to all, preparing confident learners ready to pursue their goals.

The right to play and be physically active

- to experience play as the work of childhood,
- to understand play as artistic, cultural, affordable, and accessible to all,
- to prepare for lifelong communication, cooperation, and participation.

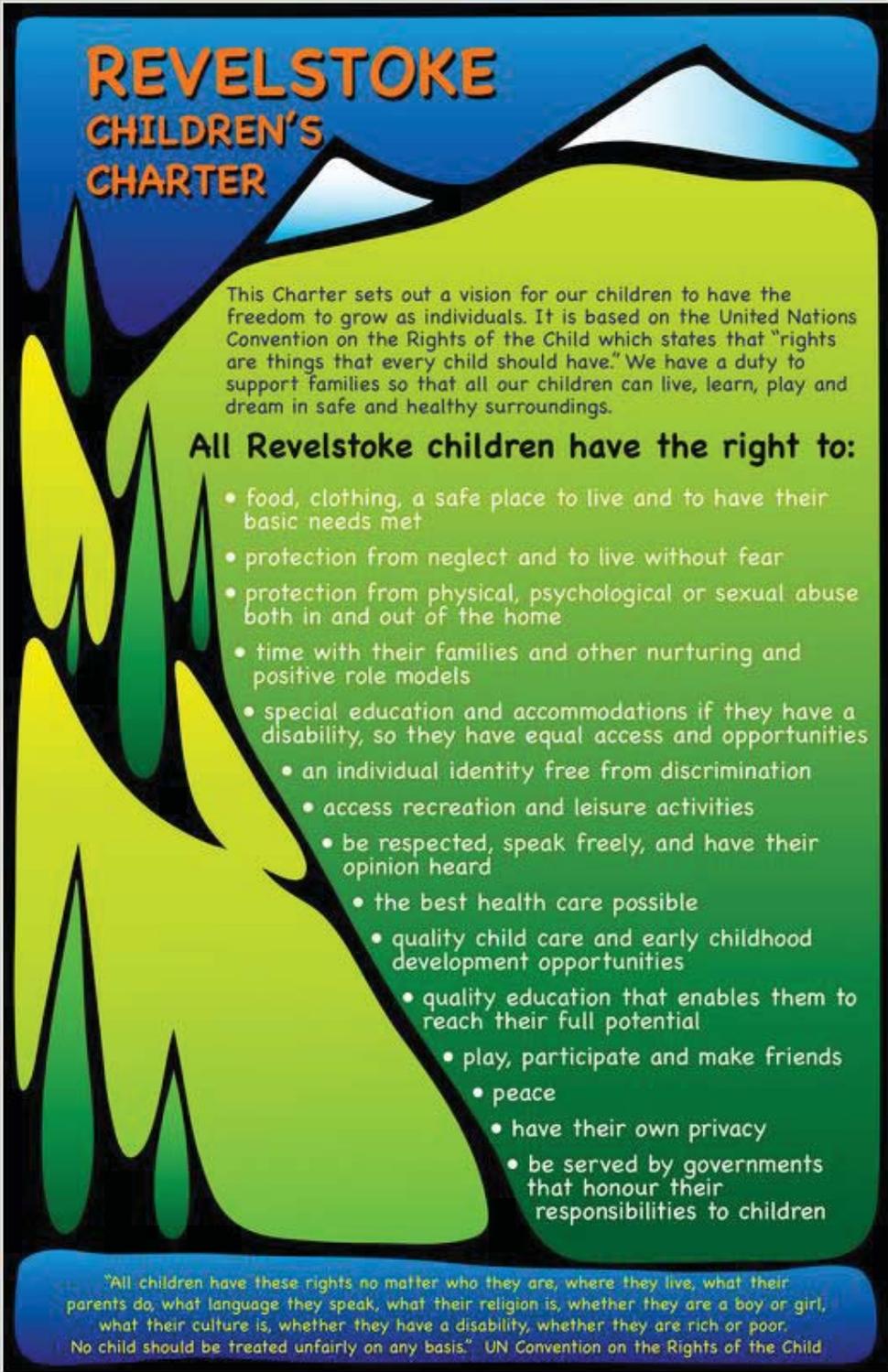
The right to contribute

- to have a voice and the ability to influence decisions
- to know you are seen, heard, respected, and treated with dignity



Revelstoke (British Columbia) | Adopted in 2012

<https://www.revelstokereview.com/community/gathering-community-support-for-revelstoke-childrens-charter/>



**REVELSTOKE
CHILDREN'S
CHARTER**

This Charter sets out a vision for our children to have the freedom to grow as individuals. It is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that "rights are things that every child should have." We have a duty to support families so that all our children can live, learn, play and dream in safe and healthy surroundings.

All Revelstoke children have the right to:

- food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have their basic needs met
- protection from neglect and to live without fear
- protection from physical, psychological or sexual abuse both in and out of the home
- time with their families and other nurturing and positive role models
- special education and accommodations if they have a disability, so they have equal access and opportunities
 - an individual identity free from discrimination
 - access recreation and leisure activities
 - be respected, speak freely, and have their opinion heard
 - the best health care possible
 - quality child care and early childhood development opportunities
 - quality education that enables them to reach their full potential
 - play, participate and make friends
 - peace
 - have their own privacy
 - be served by governments that honour their responsibilities to children

"All children have these rights no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis." UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Richmond | Adopted in 2010

<http://www.richmondchildrenfirst.ca/what-we-do/richmond-childrens-charter/>



Richmond Children's Charter

RICHMOND CHILDREN HAVE...

1-The Right To Play

"I have the right to have fun" (David, age 9)
"Playgrounds should have swings, we can be responsible" (Alyssa, age 10)

2-The Right To Learn

"I have the right to learn by making mistakes" (Jessica, age 11)
"We have the right to learn everywhere — in kindergarten, at home, with adults" (Evelyn and Austin, age 4)

3-The Right To Belong and Be Ourselves

"You have the right to special help if you need it — if your eyes don't work you need a looking dog. That is special help." (Fraser, age 5)
"I have the right to look weird." (Jason, age 10)
"Every child has the right to be forgiven." (Angela, age 10)

4-The Right To Be Loved and Have A Family

"I have the right to live in a caring family for a bright future" (Christopher, age 9)
"You have the right to be a kid with your family" (Aidan, age 5)

5-The Right To Nutritious Food and A Healthy Life

"I have the right to eat healthy food so I don't get sick" (Ethan, age 5)
"We have the right to have a family doctor" (Colin, age 10)

6-The Right to a Home

"Every child needs a home." (Hasaan, age 10)
"I speak English and Chinese but I only belong to Canada" (Fraser, age 5)



7-The Right to Choose Friends

"I have the rights to have friends from other cultures" (Aneil, age 8)
"I love meeting new friends at school. Bonjour!" (Ashley, age 9)

8-The Right to Explore, Dream, Imagine, and Create

"We have the right to dream, achieve, and be free" (Alison, age 9)
"I have the right to read to have a big mind! Reading is awesome." (Amanjit, age 8)

9-The Right to Peace and Safety

"I have the right not to be afraid." (Jimmy, age 8)
"The police protect you — and so do your mommy and daddy — and your teachers" (Fraser & Ilias, age 5)

10-The Right to Be Heard

"I have the right to ask questions and express myself." (Alice, age 11)
"We have the right to share our ideas and be listened to. Ideas are when you think of stuff hard." (Griffin, age 5)

11-The Right to Our Own Religion

"I have the right to pray" (Ali, age 7)
"We have the right to believe in what we need to believe in." (Jake, age 10)

12-The Right to a Clean Environment

"Every child needs clean water, not dirty water" (Cindy, age 9)
"I have the right to help protect the environment." (Keon, age 8)

www.richmondchildrenfirst.ca



Ministry of
Children and Family
Development

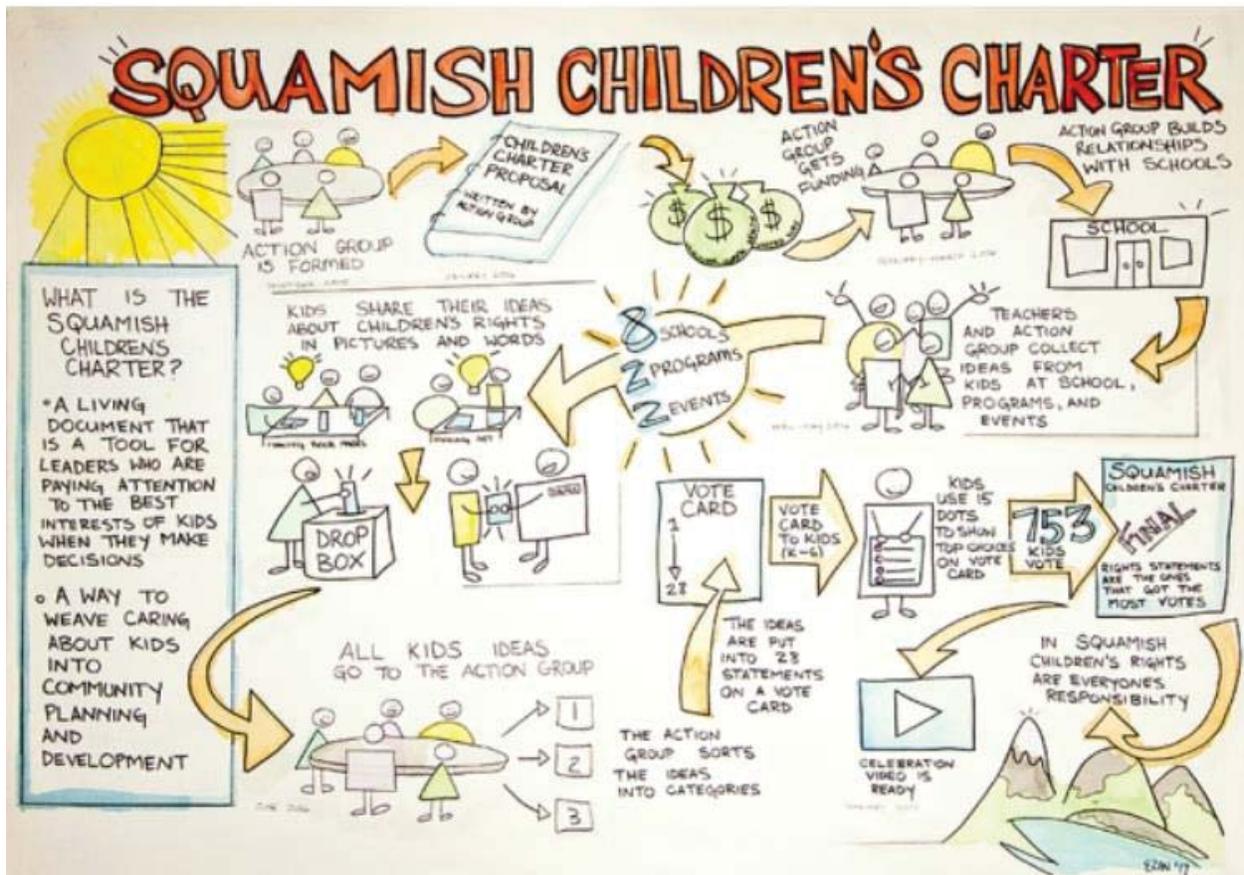
Across Richmond, over 3,000 children from the ages of 3 to 12 years old shared, through words and drawings, their opinions on children's rights in Richmond. The Richmond Children's Charter reflects the top 12 rights identified by Richmond children.

Squamish (British Columbia) | 2017

<https://squamish.ca/yourgovernment/projects-and-initiatives/healthycommunities/childrens-charter/>

Squamish Children's Charter - Rights Statement

- I have the right to survive. I have the right to a warm home, to food, to clothing and to sleep.
- I have the right to a clean environment, including fresh air and fresh water.
- I have the right to peace, to be free and to live in a safe world.
- I have the right to choice, to my own beliefs and be happy and to love who I want and to be loved.
- I have the right to play, to exercise and to recreation. I have the right to nature, to be outside, to explore, to imagine and to create.
- I have the right to be who I want and to be respected for it.
- I have the right to express myself, to have a voice, to speak out and to be included.
- I have the right to safety and to feel safe, to trust someone and the right to privacy.
- I have the right to an education.
- I have the right to health care.
- I have the right to have equal rights and to know that I have rights.



Sudbury (Ontario) | Adopted in 2002

<http://agendasonline.greatersudbury.ca/index.cfm?pg=feed&action=file&attachment=10585.pdf>



Children First

**Children First Charter of the
City of Greater Sudbury**

GIVEN THAT A thriving community invests its hopes in the future of its children;

AND THAT All children deserve to live in a family and community that believes that the welfare of children is of primary importance;

AND THAT All children deserve the assurance of their inherent goodness;

WE, THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL'S CHILDREN FIRST ROUNDTABLE IN THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY RECOMMEND THAT WE, AS A WHOLE COMMUNITY INCLUDING THE PUBLIC, PRIVATE AND NON PROFIT SECTORS, WORK DILIGENTLY AND TOGETHER SO THAT ALL CHILDREN HAVE:

A SENSE OF BELONGING TO A RESPECTFUL AND DIVERSE COMMUNITY THAT:

- preserves and celebrates the child's ethnic, cultural, spiritual and/or religious identity
- protects the child from racism and any form of discrimination including discrimination based on their age

A QUALITY OF LIFE WHICH INCLUDES ACCESS TO:

- safe housing
- nutritious food
- recreation and leisure activities
- health care

SUPPORTIVE AND CARING ENVIRONMENTS THAT INCLUDE:

- family time
- early childhood development activities and parenting supports
- quality childcare
- an educational system that ensures each child attains her or his full potential

SAFE, PROTECTIVE ENVIRONMENTS THAT:

- promote a child's cognitive, physical, social, spiritual and emotional well being
- provide protection from abuse, mistreatment, injury and disease

KNOWLEDGEABLE AND RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENTS THAT:

- understand their responsibility towards children
- invite the opportunity for children to have influence on the future
- take action in order to create a sustainable future;

AND THAT

These assurances will follow children as they progress through life's stages into adulthood.

DATED in Sudbury, Ontario, this 10th day of October, 2002.

DATÉ à Sudbury (Ontario) en ce 10^e jour d'octobre 2002.



Les enfants avant tout

**Charte des enfants « Les enfants avant tout »
de la Ville du Grand Sudbury**

ATTENDU QUE une communauté florissante fonde ses espoirs sur l'avenir de ses enfants;

ATTENDU QUE tous les enfants ont le droit de vivre dans une famille et dans une communauté pour lesquelles le bien-être des enfants a une importance primordiale;

ATTENDU QUE tous les enfants méritent d'avoir l'assurance de leur bonté inhérente;

NOUS, LES MEMBRES DE LA TABLE RONDE DU MAIRE ET DU CONSEIL « LES ENFANTS AVANT TOUT » DE LA VILLE DU GRAND SUDBURY, RECOMMANDONS QUE NOTRE COMMUNAUTÉ ENTIÈRE, COMPRENANT LES SECTEURS PUBLIC, PRIVÉ ET LES ORGANISMES À BUT NON LUCRATIF, COLLABORE ASSIDÛMENT POUR QUE LES ENFANTS AIENT:

UN SENTIMENT D'APPARTENANCE À UNE COMMUNAUTÉ RESPECTUEUSE ET DIVERSE QUI :

- protège l'enfant et met en valeur son identité ethnique, culturelle, spirituelle et religieuse
- protège l'enfant contre le racisme et toute forme de discrimination, y compris la discrimination fondée sur l'âge

UNE QUALITÉ DE VIE OBTENUE GRÂCE À :

- un logement sécuritaire
- des aliments nutritifs
- des loisirs et des activités récréatives
- des soins de santé

DES MILIEUX POSITIFS ET EMPATHIQUES DANS LESQUELS IL Y A :

- du temps passé en famille
- des activités pour le développement de la petite enfance et un soutien pour les parents
- des services de garde d'enfants de qualité
- un système éducatif qui permet à chaque enfant de s'épanouir pleinement

DES MILIEUX SÉCURITAIRES QUI PROTÈGENT L'ENFANT ET QUI :

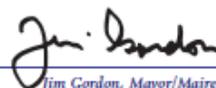
- favorisent son mieux-être cognitif, physique, social, spirituel et émotionnel
- le mettent à l'abri de la violence, des mauvais traitements, des blessures et des maladies

DES GOUVERNEMENTS BIEN INFORMÉS ET RÉCEPTIFS QUI :

- comprennent leurs responsabilités à l'égard des enfants
- sont ouverts aux possibilités permettant aux enfants d'influer sur l'avenir
- prennent des mesures pour créer un avenir viable

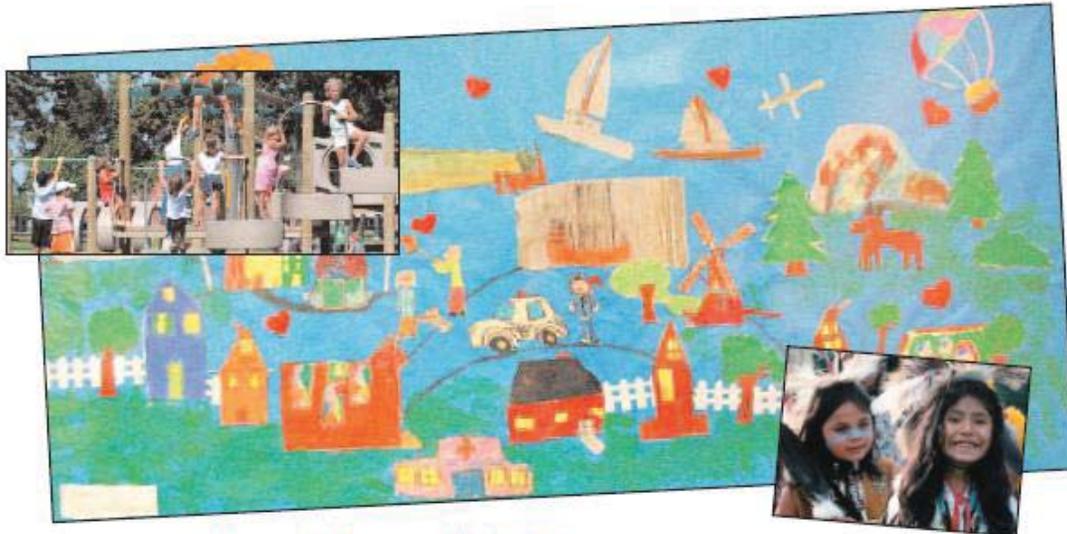
ET QUE

Les enfants auront cette assurance tout au long de leur croissance vers l'âge adulte.


Jim Gordon, Mayor/Maire

Thunder Bay (Ontario) | Adopted in 2004

http://www.thunderbay.ca/Living/Children_and_Youth/Children_s_Charter.htm



Thunder Bay Children's Charter

All children deserve basic rights and freedoms. A fair share of society's resources must be devoted to ensuring this. Families are responsible for raising their children. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child clearly states that working in partnership with communities, all levels of governments have a duty to assist families to fulfill their responsibilities.*

All Thunder Bay children deserve:

- ✓ a quality of life that meets their physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs.
- ✓ to have enough nutritious food every day.
- ✓ to have a safe and comfortable place to live.
- ✓ quality child care and/or early education programs.
- ✓ to have safe places to play, and access to affordable recreational activities.
- ✓ quality primary, secondary, and affordable post secondary education.
- ✓ the resources to ensure life-long good health.
- ✓ to be served by governments that put the health and well-being of children first by ensuring enough funding for children's programs.
- ✓ to be protected from neglect and abuse.
- ✓ to be safe from exploitation.**

* For the purposes of this Charter children are defined as being from birth to eighteen years of age.

** For the purposes of this Charter being exploited means to be used unfairly by someone else to meet their own needs.



Adopted by
City Council for the City of Thunder Bay
June 14, 2004

Toronto (ON) | Adopted in 1999

https://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/childrens_services/files/pdf/charter.pdf

TORONTO CHILDREN'S CHARTER

Children, like other human beings, are entitled to fundamental rights and freedoms but because of their unique vulnerability, it is incumbent upon adults to ensure not only that children are safe from exploitation and neglect, but that they have access to a fair share of the society's resources. While parents have the primary responsibility for their children's care and upbringing, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child makes it clear that governments have a duty to help families fulfil their responsibilities and to protect the rights of children. The Toronto Children's Charter situates the provisions of the Convention in a local context.

- ❖ All Toronto children shall be entitled to a standard of living adequate to ensure healthy physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development, well-being, and a good quality of life.
- ❖ All Toronto children shall be entitled to adequate nutrition on a consistent basis.
- ❖ All Toronto children shall be entitled to be housed in dwellings that reflect the normal standard of their community.
- ❖ All Toronto children shall be entitled to spend sufficient time with their families throughout their childhood.
- ❖ All Toronto children shall be entitled, if their parents so choose, to participate in high quality child care/early education programs designed to meet the best interests of the child.
- ❖ All Toronto children shall be entitled to participate in recreational and leisure activities, in the form of play, creative expression, and skill development opportunities.
- ❖ All Toronto children shall be entitled to receive primary, secondary and higher education to enable them to reach their full potential.
- ❖ All Toronto children shall be entitled to the highest attainable level of health and the assurance that the resources necessary to ensure life-long good health are available.
- ❖ All Toronto children have the right to be served by governments which acknowledge their responsibility to improve the health and well-being of children and work cooperatively to ensure adequate and equitable funding for children's programs.
- ❖ All Toronto children have the right to be protected from physical, psychological and sexual abuse both in and out of the home.

The foregoing rights shall apply to all Toronto children without discrimination according to race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, ability/disability, ethnic origin, language, region, property or class, religion, or any other distinction. This may entail the use of affirmative action or equity programs in order to redress situations of special individual, community or regional disadvantage.

February 1999



Vancouver (British Columbia) | Adopted in 2014
<http://www.connectforkids.ca/community/childrens-charter>

North Shore

Children's Charter



- The right to healthy food and warm clothing
- The right to make friends
- The right to culture, language and beliefs
- The right to protection and fair treatment
- The right to an education
- The right to a safe and caring home
- The right to be included equally
- The right to non-discrimination
- The right to fresh air and clean water
- The right to play

The North Shore Children's Charter is based on the 42 Articles listed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. They were developed through a collaborative process involving parents, children, community members, and representatives from agencies and organizations providing programs and services to North Shore families.



Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph | Adopted in 2006

<http://www.wdgreportcard.com/en/our-reports/wdg-children-s-charter-of-rights.aspx>

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Children's Charter of Rights



All children deserve basic rights and freedoms. A fair share of society's resources must be devoted to ensuring this. While families are responsible for raising their children, all levels of government, in partnership with communities, have a duty to support families by putting the health and well-being of children first.

All children in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph have a right to:

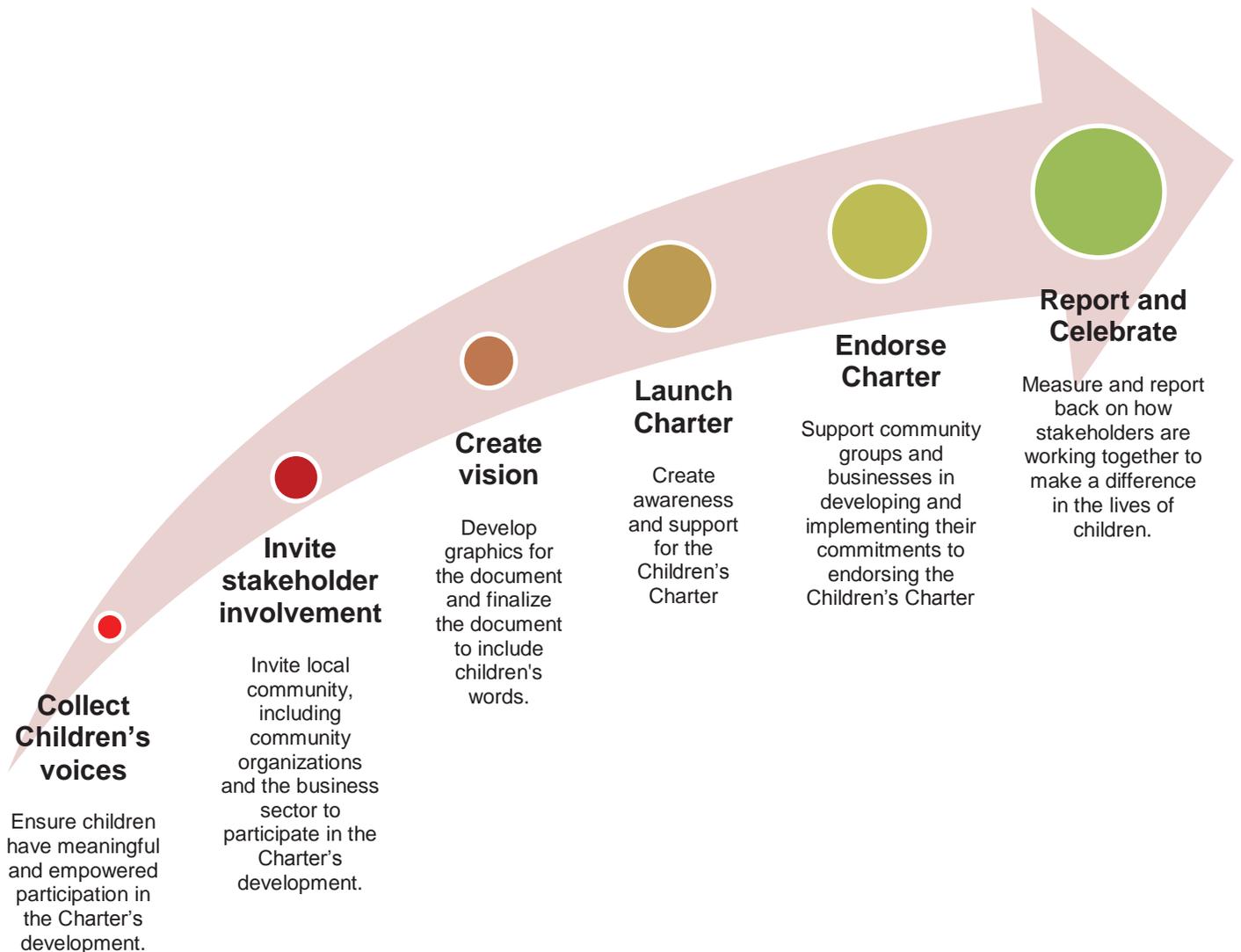
- ✓ a quality of life that meets their physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual and social needs.
- ✓ have basic needs met including nutritious food, a healthy environment and a safe and comfortable place to live.
- ✓ access quality and affordable child care, early education programs and/or parenting support.
- ✓ safe places and time to play, and access to affordable recreational activities.
- ✓ quality education to enable them to reach their full potential.
- ✓ quality time with their families and/or other nurturing and positive role models throughout their childhood.
- ✓ protection from neglect, abuse and exposure to family violence.
- ✓ be accepted for who they are, and believe what they want without being discriminated against.



Attachment 3 Overview of municipal children's charter development

Municipalities that have adopted children's charters have generally followed common stages of charter creation and implementation (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1⁶⁹



⁶⁹ Adopted from the stages described by the city of Richmond. See http://www.richmondchildrenfirst.ca/files/3513/6140/8819/Endorsement_Brochure_-_Richmond_Childrens_Charter.pdf

Collect children's voices: Although approaches vary, engaging children has been central to the creation of children's charters in Canada. Other jurisdictions have used a range of age-appropriate tactics to ensure that children have meaningful and empowered participation in the local children's charters' development.⁷⁰ Young children have contributed their views through a variety of visual, oral and written mediums including: poems, drawings, posters, bookmarks and videos. Older children have also contributed their views through blog postings, emails, online comments and survey responses (online and/or hard-copy).⁷¹ Most jurisdictions have used facilitated workshops and discussions to engage local children and youth.

Invite stakeholder input: Child-focused coalitions,⁷² working groups or mayoral roundtables⁷³ are often the impetus behind local charter creation and/or play a central role in children's charter development.⁷⁴ Typically, stakeholders are brought together to develop strategies to infuse child-centred approaches into their organizations and to help children and young people become aware of their rights. Stakeholders at the table usually include agencies/organizations that work with and for children/youth including: police; school boards and educators; child and youth support services; hospitals; mental health/sexual assault agencies/organizations; youth clubs; aboriginal organizations; and the business community.

Create the vision: Across Canada, communities have analyzed raw engagement data to determine themes for charter principles, roles and implementation strategies. Identified themes are subsequently tested and validated with children and community stakeholders. All Canadian municipalities have distilled engagement feedback into a few principles/rights (8-12 in most cases) that are easily communicated and easily understood.⁷⁵ Copies of existing children's charters created for, or adopted by, Canadian municipalities are included in **Attachment 2**.⁷⁶ Kamloops is unique in that the municipality's children's charter visioning exercise resulted in both child-friendly and youth-friendly versions.

Launch charter: Several jurisdictions have tied the launch of their local children's charter to the celebration of the United Nations' Universal Children's Day.⁷⁷ Charter launches are supported differently from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, but often include resources and/or activities to facilitate charter promotion and endorsement. These may include: press-releases; news conferences; launch events; posters; children's charter videos (website link or on flash drive); web sites; and fact sheets on individual rights. Sudbury has included its children's charter in municipal publications including the city's Leisure Guide.⁷⁸

⁷⁰ See, for example, http://www.richmondchildrenfirst.ca/files/3513/6140/8819/Endorsement_Brochure_-_Richmond_Childrens_Charter.pdf

⁷¹ Engagement of children and youth is usually done in cooperation with governmental and non-governmental organizations that work for and with children including: public and independent schools, childcare centres, and summer and after-school programs.

⁷² Thunder Bay created a Children's Charter Coalition that included representatives from health, education, social services, and community members. See <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/childrens-coalition-thunder-bay-1.4453506>

⁷³ The Mayor's roundtable in Sudbury, for example, was responsible for facilitating the local children's charter. See https://www.grandsudbury.ca/content/div_councilagendas/documents/Children_First_Roundtable_May_11_05.pdf

⁷⁴ These coalitions, working groups or roundtables may or may not be created by and/or report to municipal government.

⁷⁵ On the international stage, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child's 54 articles have likewise been converted into a child-friendly format/version. See Attachment 5

⁷⁶ In all but one case, Canadian municipalities have adopted a single children's charter for their respective jurisdiction. Kamloops is the exception, having adopted both a children's charter and a youth charter (to better reflect the somewhat differentiated needs of older children).

⁷⁷ Children's Day was established in 1954 and is celebrated annually on November 20th to promote international togetherness, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children's welfare. See <http://www.un.org/en/events/childrenday/>

⁷⁸ See https://www.grandsudbury.ca/content/div_councilagendas/documents/Children_First_Roundtable_May_11_05.pdf

Endorse charter: Communities such as the Peel Region and Richmond have created endorsement campaigns for their children's charters. Local businesses, school boards, and community agencies endorse the charter as "champions". Champions are asked to apply the principles of the children's charter in their workplace, adopt a "children first" approach to their programs and services, and display the charter publicly.⁷⁹ Children's charter commitments look different depending on: how the organization works with and for children; size of the organization; and capacity within the organization.⁸⁰ Some jurisdictions provide human or material resources to help organizations develop children's charter commitments.

Examples of children's charter organizational commitments include:

- reviewing policies with a child's lens;
- aligning programming with the children's charter;
- displaying copies of the children's charter in reception area/staff room/offices;
- educating staff about the children's charter;
- communicating the children's charter across the organization;
- advocating for the children's charter;
- asking for children's input; and
- informing children about their rights (in relation to the organization's programs and services).

Where a third-party leads the development of a children's charter for a region, the municipality itself is typically invited to endorse the children's charter as an early/first step in launching the charter to the broader community.⁸¹

Report and celebrate: Post adoption and endorsement activities are less common among Canadian municipalities that develop and/or adopt children's charters. The level of support at this stage is largely dependent on the existence of a separate entity that is responsible for the promotion of children's wellbeing within the municipality. In those jurisdictions where a stand-alone community organization is the driver behind a charter's creation the reporting and celebration of a children's charter is more likely to take place and to be sustained over time. Likewise, where the municipality itself has created a working group or roundtable to address children's interests, the likelihood of ongoing reporting is significantly higher.

Where reporting does take place, the focus is usually on raising awareness and educating the public, highlighting successes and areas that need further work, and acting as a call to action for parents, community organizations, and governmental decision-makers. Multiple jurisdictions in Canada have produced children's charter related report cards or updates, including: Children First Report Card (Sudbury),⁸² Report Card on Children's Wellbeing (Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph),⁸³ State of the Child

⁷⁹ Richmond asks those who endorse the children's charters to reflect on whether: (a) decisions in the workplace are made in the best interests of children; (b) children have a meaningful voice in decisions that are relevant to and impact them; (c) adults who work with and for children are aware of children's rights; and (d) children are informed about their rights. See http://www.richmondchildrenfirst.ca/files/3513/6140/8819/Endorsement_Brochure_-_Richmond_Childrens_Charter.pdf

⁸⁰ See, for example, the official endorsement of Sudbury's children's charter by its District Board of Health. <https://www.phsd.ca/about/board-health/motions-approved-sudbury-district-board-health/children-first-charter-motion-53-03>

⁸¹ The City of Cornwall, for example, proclaimed their support for the adoption and recognition of a Children's Charter of Rights by making a proclamation. See [http://mail.cornwall.ca/Active/Development/egenda.nsf/965d04e85bb82eb4852573ae007b4532/9e7594c3fe7df15f85257d6a004a1ec3/\\$FILE/Proclamation%20-%20Children's%20Charter%20of%20Rights.pdf](http://mail.cornwall.ca/Active/Development/egenda.nsf/965d04e85bb82eb4852573ae007b4532/9e7594c3fe7df15f85257d6a004a1ec3/$FILE/Proclamation%20-%20Children's%20Charter%20of%20Rights.pdf)

⁸² See https://www.greatersudbury.ca/content/div_councilagendas/documents/Index_Priorities_Agenda_Oct_12_05.pdf

⁸³ See <http://www.wdgreportcard.com/en/index.aspx>

(Kamloops),⁸⁴ and Children's Charter Report (Thunder Bay)⁸⁵. These documents differ in level of detail and frequency, but typically address such issues as children's nutrition, education, access to recreation, health and community supports. Some communities, like Kamloops and Thunder Bay, have historically produced reports that focus on one or more children's-charter-rights each reporting year.

⁸⁴ See <http://makechildrenfirst.ca/early-years-research/state-child-reports/>

⁸⁵ See http://www.thunderbay.ca/Living/Children_and_Youth/Children_s_Charter.htm

Attachment 4 Overview of Municipal Children's Charters | Comparative Table

Article	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Child Friendly Version) ⁸⁶	Campbell River (BC)	Kamloops (BC)	Niagra (ON)	Peel (ON)	Prince Albert (SK)	Richmond (BC)	Regina (SK)	Revelstoke (BC)	Squamish (BC)	Sudbury (ON)	Thunder Bay (ON)	Toronto (ON)	Vancouver (BC)	Wellington/Guelph (ON)
1	Everyone under 18 has these rights.			X								X			
2	All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.		X	X	X				X		X		X		X
3	All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.			X		X							X		
4	The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family to protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.			X					X		X	X	X		
5	Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.			X		X	X								
6	You have the right to be alive.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
7	You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the		X												

⁸⁶ Child friendly language version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. See <https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf>

	government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).													
8	You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.		X		X									
9	You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
10	If you live in a different country than your parents do, you have the right to be together in the same place.													
11	You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.													
12	You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X				
13	You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people						X							
14	You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.	X	X	X	X		X	X			X			X
15	You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.		X		X		X		X					
16	You have the right to privacy		X		X				X	X				
17	You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.													
18	You have the right to be raised by your parent(s) if possible.		X	X		X	X	X			X		X	X
19	You have the right to be protected from being hurt	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X		X

30	You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion - or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.		X		X		X	X						X	
31	You have the right to play and rest.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
32	You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.						X				X				
33	You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.														
34	You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.			X				X		X	X	X			X
35	No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.														
36	You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).					X					X	X			
37	No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.														
38	You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.														
39	You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.				X		X				X		X	X	
40	You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in the justice system that respects your rights.		X		X										
41	If the laws of your country provide better protection of your rights than the articles in this Convention, those laws should apply.														
42	You have the right to know your rights! Adults should know about these rights and help you learn about them, too.								X						

Attachment 5 Child Friendly Version of UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

A SUMMARY OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



ARTICLE 1 (definition of the child)
Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention.

ARTICLE 2 (non-discrimination)
The Convention applies to every child without discrimination, whether on the basis of their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background.

ARTICLE 3 (best interests of the child)
The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

ARTICLE 4 (implementation of the Convention)
Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights by creating systems and passing laws that promote and protect children's rights.

ARTICLE 5 (parental guidance and a child's evolving capacities)
Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and carers to provide guidance and direction to their child as they grow up, so that they fully enjoy their rights. This must be done in a way that recognises the child's increasing capacity to make their own choices.

ARTICLE 6 (life, survival and development)
Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to ensure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

ARTICLE 7 (birth registration, name, nationality, care)
Every child has the right to be registered at birth, to have a name and nationality, and, as far as possible, to know and be cared for by their parents.

ARTICLE 8 (protection and preservation of identity)
Every child has the right to an identity. Governments must respect and protect that right, and prevent the child's name, nationality or family relationships from being changed unlawfully.

ARTICLE 9 (separation from parents)
Children must not be separated from their parents against their will unless it is in their best interests (for example, if a parent is hurting or neglecting a child). Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this could cause them harm.

ARTICLE 10 (family reunification)
Governments must respond quickly and sympathetically if a child or their parents apply to live together in the same country. If a child's parents live apart in different countries, the child has the right to visit and keep in contact with both of them.

ARTICLE 11 (abduction and non-return of children)
Governments must do everything they can to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally by their parents or other relatives, or being prevented from returning home.

ARTICLE 12 (respect for the views of the child)
Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.

ARTICLE 13 (freedom of expression)
Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions, as long as it is within the law.

ARTICLE 14 (freedom of thought, belief and religion)
Every child has the right to think and believe what they choose and also to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to guide their child as they grow up.

ARTICLE 15 (freedom of association)
Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

ARTICLE 16 (right to privacy)
Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child's private, family and home life, including protecting children from unlawful attacks that harm their reputation.

ARTICLE 17 (access to information from the media)
Every child has the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, and governments should encourage the media to provide information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.

ARTICLE 18 (parental responsibilities and state assistance)
Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments must support parents by creating support services for children and giving parents the help they need to raise their children.

ARTICLE 19 (protection from violence, abuse and neglect)
Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

ARTICLE 20 (children unable to live with their family)
If a child cannot be looked after by their immediate family, the government must give them special protection and assistance. This includes making sure the child is provided with alternative care that is continuous and respects the child's culture, language and religion.

ARTICLE 21 (adoption)
Governments must oversee the process of adoption to make sure it is safe, lawful and that it promotes children's best interests. Children should only be adopted outside of their country if they cannot be placed with a family in their own country.

ARTICLE 22 (refugee children)
If a child is seeking refuge or has refugee status, governments must provide them with appropriate protection and assistance to help them enjoy all the rights in the Convention. Governments must help refugee children who are separated from their parents to be reunited with them.

ARTICLE 23 (children with a disability)
A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to support disabled children and their families.

ARTICLE 24 (health and health services)
Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment and education on health and well-being so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

ARTICLE 25 (review of treatment in care)
If a child has been placed away from home for the purpose of care or protection (for example, with a foster family or in hospital), they have the right to a regular review of their treatment, the way they are cared for and their wider circumstances.

ARTICLE 26 (social security)
Every child has the right to benefit from social security. Governments must provide social security, including financial support and other benefits, to families in need of assistance.

ARTICLE 27 (adequate standard of living)
Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

ARTICLE 28 (right to education)
Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity and their rights. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

ARTICLE 29 (goals of education)
Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

ARTICLE 30 (children from minority or indigenous groups)
Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

ARTICLE 31 (leisure, play and culture)
Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

ARTICLE 32 (child labour)
Governments must protect children from economic exploitation and work that is dangerous or might harm their health, development or education. Governments must set a minimum age for children to work and ensure that work conditions are safe and appropriate.

ARTICLE 33 (drug abuse)
Governments must protect children from the illegal use of drugs and from being involved in the production or distribution of drugs.

ARTICLE 34 (sexual exploitation)
Governments must protect children from all forms of sexual abuse and exploitation.

ARTICLE 35 (abduction, sale and trafficking)
Governments must protect children from being abducted, sold or moved illegally to a different place in or outside their country for the purpose of exploitation.

ARTICLE 36 (other forms of exploitation)
Governments must protect children from all other forms of exploitation, for example the exploitation of children for political activities, by the media or for medical research.

ARTICLE 37 (inhumane treatment and detention)
Children must not be tortured, sentenced to the death penalty or suffer other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment. Children should be arrested, detained or imprisoned only as a last resort and for the shortest time possible. They must be treated with respect and care, and be able to keep in contact with their family. Children must not be put in prison with adults.

ARTICLE 38 (war and armed conflicts)
Governments must not allow children under the age of 15 to take part in war or join the armed forces. Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war and armed conflicts.

ARTICLE 39 (recovery from trauma and reintegration)
Children who have experienced neglect, abuse, exploitation, torture or who are victims of war must receive special support to help them recover their health, dignity, self-respect and social life.

ARTICLE 40 (juvenile justice)
A child accused or guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect. They have the right to legal assistance and a fair trial that takes account of their age. Governments must set a minimum age for children to be tried in a criminal court and manage a justice system that enables children who have been in conflict with the law to reintegrate into society.

ARTICLE 41 (respect for higher national standards)
If a country has laws and standards that go further than the present Convention, then the country must keep these laws.

ARTICLE 42 (knowledge of rights)
Governments must actively work to make sure children and adults know about the Convention.

The Convention has 54 articles in total. Articles 43-54 are about how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights, including:

ARTICLE 45
Unicef can provide expert advice and assistance on children's rights.

OPTIONAL PROTOCOLS
There are three agreements, called Optional Protocols, that strengthen the Convention and add further unique rights for children. They are optional because governments that ratify the Convention can decide whether or not to sign up to these Optional Protocols. They are: the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict; and the Optional Protocol on a complaints mechanism for children (called Communications Procedure).

For more information go to unicef.org.uk/torc/op