

## Child and Youth Advocate Focuses on National Child Day to Bring Attention to Children's Rights

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate invites you to join in celebrating National Child Day. November 20th is a special day to celebrate children and youth, and to recognize that every young person in Canada has rights under the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

This international human rights treaty for children recognizes that children need special protections of their rights due to their age and developmental level. Canada ratified this treaty 29 years ago, with support from all provinces and territories.



The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and is committed to advocating for the rights of children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador and in helping children, youth and adults understand these rights. The best interests of children is a fundamental guiding principle of the Convention.

Celebrating National Child Day is about celebrating children as active participants in their own lives and communities. "Children and youth have a right to be heard in matters and decisions affecting them, according to Article 12 in the Convention, and must be engaged in a way appropriate to their age and developmental level," said Child and Youth Advocate Jackie Lake Kavanagh.

COVID has created significant challenges in children's lives this year. Various children and youth services were forced to adjust how they operated almost overnight. While the impacts of some of these changes on children and youth were immediately obvious such as closed schools, social isolation, and lack of access to various services, some impacts will be felt into the future, and we must be mindful of COVID's reach.

Lake Kavanagh said, "My staff and I work hard every day to protect and advance children's rights. This is more important than ever in the current pandemic. It is critical that children and youth are not left behind."

The Child and Youth Advocate offers her sincere appreciation to the many organizations, groups, and individuals who work to improve the lives of children and youth every day. This work is truly a collective effort.

If you would like to learn more about the rights of children and youth, connect with the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate at 1-877-753-3888 or check out the website [www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca](http://www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca).

Please share your tweets and pictures on our Twitter @OCYANL.

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