

Message from the Advocate

Fall is a time for new beginnings, a time to refocus and to move forward. Fall marks the start of a new school year, an exciting time for children to reconnect with old friends and make new friends!



Carol A. Chafe

Our Office prepared to move into Fall by hosting the 2015 Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates (CCCYA) Biennial Conference. The CCCYA is an alliance of Advocates from provinces and territories across Canada. This conference provided an opportunity for all our advocacy staff to reflect on how our roles have enabled us to make a difference for children and youth throughout Canada and on how we can continue to work together in carrying out our very important mandates. You can read more about the CCCYA and our conference in this edition of our newsletter.

The 'Rights' Stuff section focuses on Article 15 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)*, the right to "choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others". The conference, like the beginning of a new school year, provided us with an opportunity to network with our counterparts across Canada! In the 'Rights' Stuff section we explore the meaning of friendship with a fun colouring activity!

Have a wonderful and productive season everyone!

What We Do

CCCYA

The Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates (CCCYA) is a national alliance of Child and Youth Advocates. Each provincial Advocate or Representative is appointed by their own province or territory with similar mandates to promote and protect children's rights. Although the legislative mandates of the offices differ, the CCCYA works together to identify areas of mutual concern, and to develop ways to address issues at a national level in the absence of a Children's Commissioner for Canada or an Advocate for children and youth at the federal level. Carol Chafe is a member of the Council and has previously served as vice president and president.

The Council meets three to four times a year and a national conference occurs every two years for staff of CCCYA offices, *The Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates' Biennial Conference*. This year's conference was hosted by the Advocate for Children and Youth, Newfoundland and Labrador.

For more information on the CCCYA, check out their website: <http://www.cccya.ca>



CCCYA Members

Out and About

This year our office had the pleasure of hosting the 2015 CCCYA Biennial Conference. The conference theme was *“Coming Together in Newfoundland and Labrador, Making a Difference for Children and Youth in Canada”*.

As advocates, we are all committed to supporting the rights of children and youth and ensuring their voices are heard. This conference provided an opportunity for advocacy staff from across Canada to come together and focus on professional development, self-wellness and to network with counterparts.

The conference agenda focused on topics at the forefront of our advocacy work, including powerful presentations on mental health, LGBTQ issues, Aboriginal children and youth, and an inspirational presentation on how we can all make a difference, one child at a time. We heard an impactful presentation from a panel of youth who sit on the Youth Advisory Council – Choices for Youth. These youth spoke about their “lived experiences” and the barriers they have faced with the hope of inspiring positive change. Delegates also had the opportunity to hear about the Council’s experience at the Truth and Reconciliation Closing Ceremonies, and a panel of advocacy staff discussed how they engage youth in advocacy activities in their offices. There was also a presentation on the National Advocacy Standards that will serve as a guide for the quality of advocacy services each of our offices strives to provide.

While much work was accomplished over the course of these two days, also incorporated throughout the conference were opportunities for delegates to experience our unique culture with local entertainment and food!

We had a wonderful conference and we look forward to the CCCYA Biennial Conference being hosted by the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, Alberta in 2017!

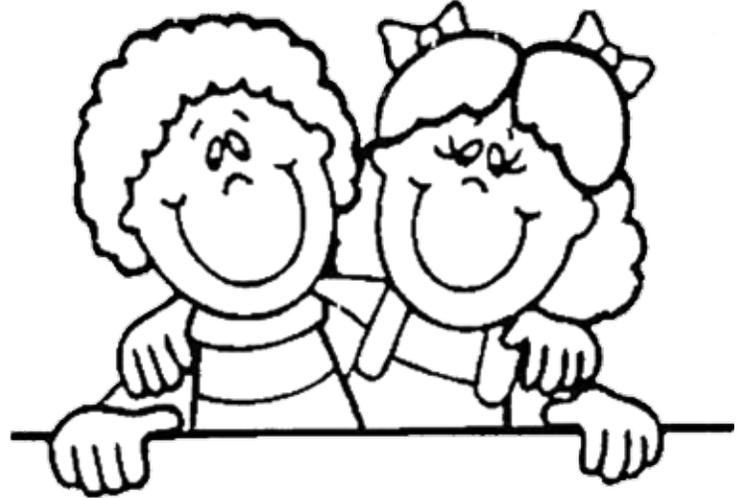
The “Rights” Stuff

Article 15 – Choose Your Own Friends

According to Article 15 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* In Child Friendly Language: “You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn’t harmful to others”

Colouring Page

Colour the friends below.



What is friendship?

- Spending time together.
- Sharing ideas and treats.
- Having fun.
- Respecting each other’s differences.
- Loyalty, sticking up for each other.
- Caring for each other’s safety and wellbeing.
- Both of you working on the skills to keep your friendship going.

“Don’t walk behind me; I may not lead. Don’t walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend.” ~ Winnie the Pooh



Opening Ceremonies



ACY Advocate and Staff



Keynote Speaker -
Sister Elizabeth Davis



St. Pat’s Dancers -
Lunchtime Entertainment

We Need Your Help!

To ensure we reach children and youth and the public, please contact us to add your name to our distribution list and we will send copies as requested.



Contact the Advocate for Children & Youth if you or someone you know is in need of help:

Phone: (709) 753-3888 • Toll Free: 1-877-753-3888

TTY: (709) 753-4366 • Fax: (709) 753-3988 • Email: office@ocya.nl.ca

WebSite: www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca

Or drop by and speak with someone in our office:

193 LeMarchant Road, St. John’s, NL • A1C 2H5 • Mon-Fri 8:30 am - 4:30 pm