

**Provincial & Regional Partners:**

Aboriginal Mother Centre Society  
ACT Autism Community Training Society  
Adoptive Families Association of BC  
Affiliation of Multicultural Societies & Service Agencies  
Alternate Shelter Society  
Association for Community Education BC  
Autism Society of BC  
BC Aboriginal Childcare Society  
BC Assoc. for Child Development & Rehabilitation  
BC Association for Community Living  
BC Association for Play Therapy  
BC Association of Child Care Employers  
BC Association of Family Resource Programs  
BC Association of Pregnancy Outreach Programs  
BC Association of Social Workers  
BC Council for Families  
BC Crime Prevention Association  
BC Farm Women's Network  
BC Federation of Foster Parents Association  
BC Government & Service Employees' Union  
BC Institute Against Family Violence  
BC Pediatric Society • BC Recreation and Parks Association  
BC School Trustees Association  
BC Teachers' Federation  
BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses  
Big Sisters of BC Lower Mainland  
Boys & Girls Clubs of BC  
Canadian Association for Young Children  
Canadian Jewish Congress, Pacific Region  
Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division  
Canadian Red Cross • Capilano Student Union  
Caring for First Nations Children Society  
Centre for Safe Schools and Communities  
Cerebral Palsy Association of BC  
Child & Family Counseling Association  
Child & Youth Care Association of BC  
Child Care Advocacy Forum  
Children's & Women's Health Centre of BC  
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC  
Council of Parent Participation Preschools BC  
Deaf Children's Society of BC  
Dietitians of Canada, BC Region  
Developmental Disabilities Association  
Early Childhood Educators of BC  
East Kootenay Childhood Coalition  
Family Services of Greater Vancouver  
Federated Anti-Poverty Groups  
Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks  
Federation of Child & Family Services of BC  
Health Officers Council of BC  
Hospital Employees' Union  
Infant Development Program of BC  
Invest in Kids • Immigrant Services Society  
Justice Institute of BC  
Learning Disabilities Association of BC  
Literacy BC • McCreary Centre Society  
MOSAIC • National Council of Jewish Women  
Pacific Association of First Nations Women  
Pacific Community Resources Society  
Pacific Legal Education Association • PARCA  
Parent Support Services Society • PeerNetBC  
Penticton & District Community Resources Society  
Phoenix Human Services Association  
Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society  
Public Health Association of BC  
Social Planning & Research Council BC  
Society for Children & Youth of BC  
Society for Public Education of BC  
Society of Special Needs Adoptive Parents  
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society  
Toxic Free Canada  
United Way of the Lower Mainland  
Vancouver Coastal Health – Population Health  
Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre  
Westcoast Family Resources Society  
Working Group on Poverty • YWCA of Greater Vancouver  
...and 26 Community Coalition Partners.

January 20, 2009

Carole James  
Leader of the Opposition  
Room 201  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Ms. James,

First Call, the BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, is writing to you about our hopes to see British Columbia adopt a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy in the very near future.

We very much appreciate the stands the New Democratic Party has taken over the years on child poverty, homelessness and the minimum wage, but we are extremely disappointed that the party has not developed and promoted a full-fledged program for fighting poverty during its eight years in opposition. Social policy and anti-poverty groups have been years ahead of the politicians in this regard.

First Call is urging all political parties to make fighting poverty a prime objective of government.

We have also written to Premier Campbell about his year-end comments saying that children are his top political priority. Based on his remarks, we would expect to see children's issues featured in the speech from the throne and the budget speech next month.

Our group, as you know, is a coalition of more than 80 provincial and regional organizations, mobilized communities and individuals who believe children should have "first call" on society's resources. Our partner organizations have expertise in virtually every area of public policy affecting children and their parents.

Members of our coordinating committee are available, as always, to meet with you at your convenience to discuss how to push forward an anti-poverty agenda.

Sincerely,

Julie Norton  
Provincial Chairperson

cc: NDP Caucus