

## First Call's Weekly Announcements – April 15, 2010

Next ECD Roundtable: May 26

Next Coalition Meeting: May 12

Living Wage Roundtable: May 11

Visit our [web site](#) for more information.

### A. [Advocacy/Calls to Action](#)

1. [Living Wage Roundtable May 11](#)
2. [Vancouver Taking Action for Education](#)
3. [Legal Aid Film Showing in Vancouver, New Legal Education Resource](#)
4. [Cerebral Palsy Association Speaks Out Against Cuts](#)

### B. [Research & Resources](#)

1. [Early Childhood Education and Care as a Foundation for Respecting Diversity](#)
2. [The Social Determinants of Children's Health](#)
3. [New Bulletin on Newcomer Children](#)

### C. [Announcements](#)

1. [Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Week April 18-24](#)
2. [Take Action Academy – Youth Leadership Opportunity](#)
3. [Parents as Literary Supporters Training](#)

We welcome your comments, suggestions and any research or event information you wish to have shared with the First Call network. Please let us know what's going on in your community so we can help spread the word!

Please visit our web site at [www.firstcallbc.org](http://www.firstcallbc.org) for further details on upcoming First Call meetings, events, new publications and more.

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition  
202 – 1193 Kingsway, Vancouver, V5V 3C9  
Ph: 604-873-8437 Fx: 604-874-9898  
Email: [info@firstcallbc.org](mailto:info@firstcallbc.org)

---

## Advocacy/Calls to Action

---

### 1. Living Wage Roundtable May 11

On Tuesday, May 11, the Living Wage for Families Campaign (hosted by First Call) will hold a Living Wage Roundtable to update the community on the progress of the campaign. Speakers will include:

- Seth Klein, Director of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, on how cost of living increases this year have effected how the Living Wage is calculated.
- Councillor Jamie McEvoy on the efforts in New Westminster to get the first Living Wage by-law in Canada passed.
- Elisabeth Geller of VANCITY on recognizing employers that pay a Living Wage.
- Patrick Johnson, organizer with United Food and Commercial Workers 1518 on how unions can support workers to ensure they earn a living wage.
- Priti Shah, research consultant, on listening to the voices of those on low wages.

Anyone is welcome to attend the Living Wage Roundtable. It will take place from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM at Vancouver Community College (Downtown) in Room 240, 250 West Pender.

Come along to learn, listen, debate, network, strategize and hopefully have some fun! RSVP to [info@livingwageforfamilies.ca](mailto:info@livingwageforfamilies.ca) or 604-873-8437. Find out more about the campaign at [www.livingwageforfamilies.ca](http://www.livingwageforfamilies.ca).

[../top](#)

## 2. Vancouver Taking Action for Education

A number of rallies and forums are coming up to stop education cuts in Vancouver:

On Sunday, April 18 at 2:00 PM a public forum will be held at John Oliver (530 E. 41<sup>st</sup> Ave), sponsored by the Stop School Cuts Coalition – visit [www.stopschoolcuts.org](http://www.stopschoolcuts.org).

On Monday, April 19 there is a rally to protest school cutbacks from 7:30 – 8:30 AM with parents and students from Hastings Elementary. Meet at the entrance to Playland on Hastings and Windemere with your children and signs. Find out more at [www.studentsbeforestadiums.org](http://www.studentsbeforestadiums.org).

On Tuesday, April 20 parents and staff of General Gordon Elementary have organized a rally at the office of the Minister of Education. Meet at 4:00 PM at 1245 W. Broadway.

Education Minister Margaret MacDiarmid announced yesterday that she has appointed a special advisor to review the finances of the Vancouver School Board, stating that “the Vancouver board of education is either unable or unwilling to manage its resources to protect the interests of students.” Board chair Patti Bacchus said that the appointment was inappropriate, and that the board’s budget must be finalized before the special advisor’s report is completed on May 31 to allow time for layoff notices to go out. Read more about it on [cbc.ca](http://cbc.ca).

[Send First Call information](#) about what’s happening in your school district!

[../top](#)

### 3. Legal Aid Film Showing in Vancouver, New Legal Education Resource

A short film called *Justice for All?*, made by staff of the Professional Employees Association in conjunction with volunteers and justice system advocates, outlines the recent cuts to legal aid funding in the province, and tells the story of several women who struggle without access to funding for civil law cases.

The film will be shown on Saturday, April 17 on a continuous loop at the BC Branch of the Bar Association's Day for Legal Aid at the central branch of the Vancouver Public Library. It is also available to view online [here](#).

A new website, [www.clicklaw.bc.ca](http://www.clicklaw.bc.ca), provides legal information, education, and help for British Columbians. Use the site to find practical information about your legal rights, responsibilities and options; find those who can help with legal problems; learn about the law; and access resources that feature reform and research of laws in BC. The website content comes from 24 contributing organizations, including BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre, West Coast LEAF, PovNet, the Law Foundation of BC, and Legal Services Society.

[.../top](#)

### 4. Cerebral Palsy Association Speaks Out Against Cuts

First Call coalition partner the Cerebral Palsy Association of BC issued a press release regarding recent cuts to supports for people on disability and income assistance:

*The Cerebral Palsy Association of British Columbia is deeply concerned about recent cuts to social assistance and shelter allowance affecting people with disabilities.*

*The provincial budget released in March pledged to "enhance support for the vital public services that British Columbians rely on every day." Now, for a potential savings of \$25 million over two years, shelter and supports are being pulled back from some of BC's most vulnerable citizens -- those with low incomes and those living with disabilities.*

*Minimum shelter allowance, water and nutritional supplements for persons with disabilities all are being affected, along with other reductions to an already-stripped income assistance program.*

*"Just weeks ago our government was encouraging us to celebrate paralympians for their strength and courage," Craig Langston President, Cerebral Palsy Association of BC, "but the choices being made here clearly don't support social and economic independence for people with disabilities. These cuts are a regressive step for this province. The truer costs of the cuts and the new restrictive language will negatively impact people with disabilities and will have long lasting effects. Their lives will be greatly impeded from acquiring the necessary supports and assistive devices they need to live, work and play in our communities. This is outrageous and unacceptable!"*

*The cuts were announced through an information bulletin from the Ministry of Housing and Social Development. This is the same Ministry that is encouraging people with disabilities to seek employment and enter the workforce. In reality, these changes will create additional barriers and make it harder for people with disabilities to reach their highest potential and be engaged in their community. Is this another case of the left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing?*

*On March 11, 2010, Canada ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Convention signatories recognize the right to independence, equality and self-determination for people with disabilities including "an adequate standard of living and assistance for disability-related needs, as well as assistance with disability-related expenses in case of poverty."*

[../top](#)

---

## Research & Resources

---

### 1. Early Childhood Education and Care as a Foundation for Respecting Diversity

A new report from the Childcare Resource and Research Unit examines whether early childhood education and care can help keep Canada's promise of respect for diversity:

*The idea that learning in early childhood establishes the foundation for cognitive and social development and lifelong learning has a substantial and well established knowledge base. There is also evidence that early childhood - before children have had a chance to form negative ideas about difference - is a prime time for learning positive ideas about tolerance and respect for diversity. This suggests that it is expedient for modern societies - especially extremely diverse societies like Canada - to ensure the wide availability of environments in which preschool-age children have the best possible opportunities to develop these positive ideas. In this context, robust public policy frameworks that support early childhood education and care (ECEC) programs that are: accessible to all children, inclusive and responsive to diverse ethnic and racial groups, and use effective approaches to learning to respect diversity are not only practical but essential.*

The report is available for download [here](#).

[../top](#)

### 2. The Social Determinants of Children's Health

A series of four articles in the journal Paediatric Child Health examine children's health in Canada and prospects of the future. The author, Dennis Raphael, is a

leading expert on the social determinants of health from York University. The [first article](#) suggests numerous areas for improvement of children's health, including infant mortality rates and low birth weight rates, indicators which are linked to income. [Part 2](#) focuses on the effects of living conditions on health inequalities, and [part 3](#) looks at how public policy decisions shape the social determinants of health. [Part 4](#) calls on physicians to become advocates for public policy in the service of health.

Abstracts of each article are available for free online, or contact First Call to receive the PDF files.

[../top](#)

### 3. New Bulletin on Newcomer Children

The AMSSA Newcomer Children Information Exchange (ANCIE) is a new monthly electronic newsletter exploring topics about newcomer children. You can access it online at [www.amssa.org/ancie](http://www.amssa.org/ancie) or subscribe by e-mailing [newcomerchildren@amssa.org](mailto:newcomerchildren@amssa.org).

From the first bulletin:

*Newcomer Children are children aged 0-12 years, born abroad or in Canada, with one or both parents having immigrant, refugee or temporary resident status. The term "newcomer" is used rather than "immigrant," as it is inclusive of categories that may not fit under the classification of "immigrant." It includes temporary foreign workers, live-in caregivers, and international students.*

*The ANCIE Bulletin will explore different topics related to newcomer children. There are a number of service providers, educators and researchers currently working with newcomer children to help them succeed, but their work is rarely documented. The ANCIE Bulletins will provide an opportunity to feature some of their work, strategies, service models, success stories and/or research. Each issue will also include a relevant case study. The following topics will be explored in the coming months: English as a Second Language, Early Childhood Education, Health and Wellness, Refugee Children.*

[../top](#)

---

## Announcements

---

### 1. Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Week April 18-24

The province has proclaimed next week as Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Week. The proclamation acknowledges the ongoing personal, social and health problems stemming from child sexual abuse, and the critical importance of community education and clinical services for children and families. You can read the proclamation online [here](#).

[../top](#)

## 2. Take Action Academy – Youth Leadership Opportunity

Me to We and Free the Children are presenting a week-long Take Action Academy this summer, where youth can develop leadership and public speaking skills, explore social and environmental issues, learn about volunteerism and activism, and create action plans for making a difference. The academy will take place in Vancouver from July 31 – August 7, as well as in Toronto, Sackville, and Montreal. Bursaries are available. Contact [academy@metowe.com](mailto:academy@metowe.com) or 1-877-METOWE1 for more information.

[../top](#)

## 3. Parents as Literary Supporters Training

A Parents as Literacy Supporters (PALS) free training workshop is being sponsored by the Delta Literacy Now Steering Committee and 2010 Legacies Now. This new PALS in Communities training helps families encourage child development. It is a family literacy program that provides Immigrant/Aboriginal parents and caregivers strategies to encourage early literacy and learning development in their preschool and kindergarten-aged children, through interactions in English and their first language.

The workshops will consist of:

- an overview of the history and the development of PALS and PALS in Immigrant Communities (Friday)/ Aboriginal Communities (Saturday)
- a discussion of the program framework and logistics of delivering a program
- PALS session themes will be demonstrated and a discussion about working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities will be facilitated.

The training will take place on Friday, May 14 (Immigrant Communities) and Saturday, May 15 (Aboriginal Communities) from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Delta Manor Education Centre, 4750 57th Street, Ladner (free parking is available in the parking lot and on the street).

Who should attend? ECD staff from a range of sectors including: education, libraries, non profit service providers, First Nations, government and others that would benefit from this practical training.

Please register by emailing [north@bgccs.bc.ca](mailto:north@bgccs.bc.ca) or by phoning the Boys and Girls Club Community Services of Delta/Richmond at 604-591-9262.

[../top](#)