

## First Call's Weekly Announcements – November 5, 2009

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Next Coalition Meeting: December 9  
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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.

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**Advocacy/Calls to Action**

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## 1. Call for Support for Living Wage By-law in New Westminister

On Monday, November 9th ACORN Canada (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now) is asking New Westminister Council to investigate passing a Living Wage By-law for that city. If New Westminister Council votes to accept this proposal, it will become the first city in BC to actively consider passing a Living Wage By-law. This pioneering work needs all the support it can get.

The Living Wage for Families Campaign is asking you to contact the ACORN Canada offices in New Westminister ([bcacornva@gmail.com](mailto:bcacornva@gmail.com)) before Monday evening to endorse this proposal. We would especially encourage groups who have offices or partnerships in New Westminister to show their support.

This is just the first step in the process of getting the first Living Wage By-law passed in Metro Vancouver, as it is anticipated that New Westminister will not vote on an actual Living Wage By-law for a couple of months. We will keep you up to date on further ways you can support this campaign as it progresses.

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## 2. Rally to Save Autism Intensive Early Intervention Programs Tomorrow

A rally will take place Friday, November 6 at 9:30 am outside of Minister Mary Polak's Langley Constituency office at 20611 Fraser Highway, Langley.

Here is a message from F.A.I.R. (Fighting Autism Intervention Reductions) and MOMs on the Move:

Early intervention works! EIBI programs have decades of proven research behind them. They significantly reduce the burden on public schools/special education and lifelong social services.

BC can afford these programs! Last week, Minister Polak personally informed us that she has sufficient funding in her budget to save these programs and that cutting them is her choice because she thinks the increasing incidence of autism makes them unsustainable!

The costs of these EIBI programs have been stable since their inception in 2001 - provincial autism costs have increased drastically in other areas, not EIBI. The additional lifetime costs for a single child who needs EIBI and doesn't get it are more than twice as much as the potential savings from cutting the entire provincial EIBI program. BC taxpayers will pay far more by cutting these programs!

If you can't make it Friday, please:

- E-mail [Mary.Polak@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Mary.Polak@gov.bc.ca) and ask her to reverse her plans to cut EIBI programs
- Phone her office at 250-387-9699

- Write her a letter at PO Box 9057 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC, V8W 9E2
- Sign this [petition](#)
- Click this link to see a very informative article in the Langley Times

Contact [vwcher@hotmail.com](mailto:vwcher@hotmail.com) for more information on the rally.

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### 3. Provincial Pre-Budget Submissions

Two additional submissions on the provincial budget are available from [Canadian Mental Health Association](#) and [BC Healthy Living Alliance](#). Please see [last week's Announcements](#) for links to First Call's submission and those of other partners.

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### 4. Position Paper on Homelessness from Burnaby Board of Trade

The Burnaby Board of Trade published a position paper on homelessness in the Burnaby Now newspaper on October 7. The Board of Trade is taking an active stand against homelessness, stating that a recent survey found homelessness and affordable housing were the top two social issues that their business membership wanted to address. The position paper argues that:

- Homelessness is bad for business and is expensive
- Homelessness is a waste of human capital and productivity
- Homelessness reflects poorly on our society
- Homeless numbers are increasing
- Affordable housing is in short supply

The Burnaby Board of Trade has joined the call for the federal government to develop a national housing strategy. Add your voice to the campaign for a national housing strategy [here](#).

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### 5. Broadbent Urges Higher Tax Rates for Those at the Top

At a recent lecture in New Brunswick, former federal NDP leader Ed Broadbent proposed an increase in taxes for the top ten percent of earners to eliminate child poverty in Canada. The top 100,000 earners in Canada make an average of over \$600,000 a year, and a six percent increase in taxation could provide an additional \$3.7 billion annually. Broadbent cited the growing income gap between the highest earners and other Canadians, noting that most Canadians earn less now than they did ten years ago, and that a tax increase for the highest earners would be enough to double the current national child benefit.

Read more about Broadbent's lecture in the [Daily Gleaner](#).

## Research & Resources

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### 1. Bridging Immigrants and Refugees with ECD Services

S.U.C.C.E.S.S and the Human Early Learning Partnership have released a new study titled *Bridging Immigrants and Refugees with ECD Services: Partnership Research in the Development of an Effective Service Model*. Their research found that:

- There are barriers to service access. Invisible barriers arising from perceived discrimination/attitude of staff/service providers, cultural differences in the perception of service as well as concrete barriers due to distance, cost of childcare, language, culture, and availability of information.
- Diverse newcomer communities have different cultural beliefs and practices, and different understandings of ECD.
- Regardless of the cultural groups they belong to, many parents wonder about the status of moral development in the Canadian approach to ECD.
- ECD services and programs are in general not responsive to immigrant families with special needs children.

The report is available [here](#).

### 2. Policies to Combat Poverty in Five Provinces

The National Collaborating Centre for Healthy Public Policy, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, has conducted a scan of comprehensive laws and strategies in the five provinces (Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, Ontario, Manitoba and Nova Scotia) that have strategies/legislation to combat poverty.

The document is available [here](#).

### 3. Report on the State of Public Health in Canada

The new report from Dr. David Butler-Jones, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, highlights six health issues that are either having a substantial impact on the health of Canadian children or that are persistent or worsening. They are:

- Socio-economic status and developmental opportunities

- Abuse and neglect
- Prenatal risks
- Mental health and disorders
- Obesity
- Unintentional injuries

The report calls for improvement and action on the collection and sharing of data and information, ongoing education and awareness, healthy and supportive environments, and multi-pronged and sustained strategies.

Read the report [here](#).

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#### 4. CCPA Study on Guaranteed Income

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has released *Possibilities and Prospects: The Debate Over a Guaranteed Income*, by Margot Young and James P Mulvale. Here is a short summary of the report:

The idea of a guaranteed income has a long and respectable history in Canadian political and economic thought. Recently, in the face of both wide criticism of the Canadian income security system and growing recognition of the unacceptability of current poverty rates, there has been a resurgence in calls for implementation of a Canadian guaranteed income. But the idea is a controversial one; progressive activists, academics, and politicians disagree about the desirability and the practicality of a guaranteed income.

This report traces the history of guaranteed income proposals in Canada, reviews the arguments in favour and against, and suggests a number of other social welfare measures that should be central elements of any reform program, but that guaranteed income debates often ignore.

The report is available on the CCPA [website](#).

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## Announcements

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### 1. Camp J.U.I.C.E. Child Rights Event in Vancouver

The Camp J.U.I.C.E. Summit will bring forward a gathering of hearts and minds of those dedicated to heightening awareness for the rights of children. On Monday, December 7 you are invited to an evening of meaningful discussion and strategic

planning toward a common goal: to empower our children with knowledge and understanding of their rights and complimentary responsibilities. Through a combination of engaging keynote presentations and interactive dialogue, we aim to unite the compelling voice and capability of young change makers with those of us more seasoned, and together, share experiences and perspectives, inspire innovation and creativity, and explore best practices.

At this first in a series of Camp J.U.I.C.E. 'Summits for Empowerment', we will unite to advance child rights education, at home, in the communities, in the classrooms, and in the boardrooms. Camp J.U.I.C.E. will welcome our esteemed keynote presenters, Dr. Katherine Covell and Dr. Brian Howe, Directors and Co-Founders of Cape Breton University's Child Rights Centre. Find out more about the Children's Rights Centre [here](#) and read an [article](#) by Dr. Brian Howe on a National Children's Commissioner.

Join Camp J.U.I.C.E. on December 7 for networking from 5 – 6 PM and the empowerment circle from 6 – 8 PM at the Canadian Red Cross office at 3400 Lake City Way in Burnaby. Refreshments will be served, and RSVPs are required to [childheroes@shaw.ca](mailto:childheroes@shaw.ca).

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## 2. Recent Awards to Adoptive Families Association and Other First Call Partners

Congratulations to First Call coalition partner Adoptive Families Association of BC for their award of excellence for advocacy from the Representative for Children and Youth. Find out more about this and other awards presented by the Rep [here](#).

The Federation of Community Social Services of BC also presented their award of excellence yesterday, which went to Dana Brynelsen, Infant Development Program Provincial Advisor, and Carol Matusicky, former Executive Director of BC Council for Families. Bravo to all!

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## 3. Public Health Association of BC Forum on Poverty

The Public Health Association of BC and the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition present a free community forum on "Urban Poverty, Health and a Sustainable Future – is Time Running Out?"

The event will include an opening address by Dr. Trevor Hancock, a founder of the global healthy cities and communities movement and recipient of the Humanitarian Award from the International Society for Urban Health. Other panelists will include Dr. Patty Daly, Dr. Evan Adams, Seth Klein, and Judy Graves.

The forum takes place on Monday, November 23 from 7 – 9 PM at St. Andrews Wesley Church in Vancouver.

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#### 4. SPARC BC Hosts Digital Storytelling Workshop

SPARC BC is hosting a Digital Storytelling Workshop on November 24. Learn how to tell your story through multi-media. This is a day long, hands-on workshop from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Register by November 11, 2009 at 604.718.8520.

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#### 5. Parenting Education Event from Council of Parent Participation Preschools

Parenting speaker and educator Raj Dhasi will present "Understanding the Brain Science Behind Your Child's Behaviour" on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 – 8:30 pm at Vancouver Technical Secondary School, 2600 East Broadway in Vancouver.

This session is focused on understanding the science behind your preschooler's behaviour. Bring your "Why does she...." "Why won't he..." questions and discover what you need to know about brain development. You will walk away with a sigh of relief and added tips and techniques to navigate these tender years and ensure your child has the healthiest brain development possible.

Raj Dhasi (M.A. in Conflict Analysis and Management) is both a mom and conflict resolution practitioner supporting families and workplace organizations in navigating difficult situations.

Tickets are available at the door for \$10.00. Contact the Council of Parent Participation Preschools in BC for tickets at (604)435-4430 or [cnclbc@telus.net](mailto:cnclbc@telus.net).

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