

NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY 2005

Canadians Reflect on the State of the Child in Canada



Ipsos Reid

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NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY 2005

Canadians Reflect on the State of the Child in Canada

Toronto, ON – To mark National Child Day on November 20th, a new Ipsos Reid survey conducted on behalf of Save the Children Canada reveals that while most Canadians believe children are faring well in Canada, a significant minority do not.

Six in ten (61%) Canadians agree that "children's rights are being fully realized in Canada," but 37% disagree with this statement. While 58% agree that "the Canadian government adequately represents and deals with various issues facing children, in the areas of education, poverty labour, violence, development, and protection," 40% disagree. And, the six in ten (61%) Canadians who agree that "Canada is equipped to ensure the safety and security of children during an emergency such as the Tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, and the earthquake in Pakistan" is overshadowed by the full third (34%) who disagree that Canada is equipped to do so.

Moreover, only 50% of Canadians feel "there is adequate public knowledge and information available to truly understand how children are faring in Canada." It comes as no surprise then that 82% of Canadians think "Canada needs a national ombudsperson to deal specifically with children and youth issues."

The survey also indicates that three in four (77%) Canadians believe "Children's Rights should be in addition to and distinct from human Rights." However, while two in three



(64%) Canadians have heard of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, just 46% are aware of the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Finally, 96% of Canadians agree that "children need play time as much as they need education and nurturing" but four in ten (40%) Canadians don't realize that the right to play, the right to education, the right to health and the right to protection are all ranked *equally* in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid/Save the Children Canada poll conducted from November 1 to 3, 2005. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 1002 adult Canadians was interviewed by telephone. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 2001 Census data.

Most Canadians Believe Children Are Faring Well In Canada, But A Significant Minority Do Not...

Six in ten (61%) Canadians agree (21% "strongly" and 40% "somewhat") that "children's rights are being fully realized in Canada," while 37% disagree (25% "somewhat" and 12% "strongly"). Another 2% are unsure.

- Residents of Quebec (66%), Ontario (64%), Atlantic Canada (63%), and Alberta (63%) are more likely to agree than residents of Saskatchewan/Manitoba (48%) and British Columbia (49%).

- Canadians 18-34 years of age are more likely than those who are older to agree with this statement (70% vs. 57%).
- Men are more likely than women to agree with this statement (66% vs. 57%).

While 58% agree (17% "strongly" and 41% "somewhat") that "the Canadian government adequately represents and deals with various issues facing children, in the areas of education, poverty labour, violence, development, and protection," 40% disagree (22% "somewhat" and 17% "strongly"). The remaining 2% are unsure.

Six in ten (61%) Canadians agree (20% "strongly" and 41% "somewhat") that "Canada is equipped to ensure the safety and security of children during an emergency such as the Tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, and the earthquake in Pakistan," while one-third (34%) disagree (19% "somewhat" and 15% "strongly") that Canada is equipped to do so. Another 5% don't know.

- Residents of Atlantic Canada (66%), Ontario (63%), Quebec (62%), Alberta (62%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (61%) are more likely than residents of British Columbia (48%) to agree.
- Agreement nominally decreases with age: 68% of those 18-34 years of age agree vs. 61% of those 35-54 vs. 54% of Canadians 55 years or older.
- Men are more likely than women to agree with this statement (65% vs. 57%).

And, Just 50% Think There's Enough Information Available To Understand The State Of Children In Canada; Most Think Canada Needs An Ombudsperson

Only 50% of Canadians agree (15% "strongly" and 34% "somewhat") that "there is adequate public knowledge and information available to truly understand how children are faring in Canada." Forty-seven percent disagree (30% "somewhat" and 17% "strongly") with this statement and 4% don't know.

- Residents of Atlantic Canada (62%) and Ontario (57%) are more likely than residents of Quebec (40%), British Columbia (41%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (42%) to think there is enough information. Half (50%) of Albertans agree with the statement.
- Agreement directionally decreases with age: 53% of those 18-34 years of age agree vs. 51% of those 35-54 vs. 44% of Canadians 55 years or older.

Eight in ten (82%) Canadians agree (46% "strongly" and 36% "somewhat") that "Canada needs a national ombudsperson to deal specifically with children and youth issues," while 16% disagree (10% "somewhat" and 6% "strongly") with this idea. The remaining 2% are unsure about how they feel.

- Residents of Quebec (88%) and Atlantic Canada (87%) are more likely to agree than residents of British Columbia (79%), Alberta (79%), Ontario (79%), and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (80%).



- Canadians 18-54 years of age are more likely than those 55 or older to agree (85% vs. 76%).
- Women are more likely than men to agree with this statement (89% vs. 75%).

The UN's Convention And Children's Rights

Three in four (77%) Canadians agree (42% "strongly" and 35% "somewhat") that "Children's Rights should be in addition to and distinct from human Rights." In comparison, 21% disagree (12% "somewhat" and 9% "strongly") and 2% don't know.

- Residents of Quebec (87%) are more likely than others to agree: British Columbia (76%), Alberta (75%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (68%), Ontario (74%), and Atlantic Canada (73%).
- Agreement nominally decreases with age: 83% of those 18-34 years of age agree vs. 78% of those 35-54 vs. 71% of Canadians 55 years or older.
- Women are more likely than men to agree with this statement (82% vs. 72%).

Two in three (64%) Canadians have heard of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while one in three (35%) have not. One percent don't know.

- Residents of Saskatchewan/Manitoba (74%) are the most aware, closely followed by residents of Ontario (71%), Alberta (69%), Atlantic Canada (65%), British Columbia (61%), and finally Quebec (52%).

- Canadians 55 years of age or older are more likely than those 18-54 to be aware of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (74% vs. 59%).

Less than half (46%) of Canadians are aware of the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child. Fifty-four percent say they have not heard of it and 1% don't know.

- Residents of Saskatchewan/Manitoba (56%) are the most aware, followed by residents of Ontario (48%), British Columbia (48%), Alberta (43%), Quebec (42%), and Atlantic Canada (35%).
- Awareness increases with age: 31% of Canadians 18-34 years of age are aware vs. 47% of those 35-54 vs. 59% of those 55 or older.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child lists the rights to which every child is entitled; these include the right to survival; the right to the development of their full physical and mental potential; the right to protection from influences that are harmful to their development; and the right to participation in family, cultural and social life. The Convention protects these rights by setting minimum standards that governments must meet in securing the rights of children. 192 countries, including Canada, have ratified this convention.

Nearly all (96%) Canadians agree (79% "strongly" and 18% "somewhat") that "children need play time as much as they need education and nurturing." In comparison, 2% "somewhat disagree," 1% "strongly disagree," and 1% don't know.

Four in ten (40%) Canadians don't realize that the right to play, the right to education, the right to health and the right to protection are all ranked *equally* in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Conversely, 60% correctly understand that they are all ranked equally.

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- Residents of Atlantic Canada (67%) and Ontario (66%) are most likely to know this, followed by residents of Quebec (58%), British Columbia (54%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (50%), and Alberta (49%).

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For more information on this news release, please contact:

*John Wright
Senior Vice President
Ipsos Reid
Public Affairs
(416) 324-2900*

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