

The Canadian Legal Network for Children with Special Needs

FROM THE U.N. CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

A mentally or physically disabled child has the right to a full and decent life in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate active participation in the community.

The State shall provide special care, free of charge, whenever possible, to ensure that the disabled child receives education, training and services leading to the fullest possible social integration and individual development.

The child has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health.

The child has the right to a free and compulsory primary education, equal access to secondary and higher education and school discipline which reflects the child's human dignity.

The State shall ensure that education is directed at developing the child's personality and talents; preparing the child for responsible life in a free society; and developing respect for the child's parents, basic human rights, the natural environment and the child's own cultural and national values and those of others.

The Canadian Legal Network for
Children with Special Needs

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The Canadian Legal Network for Children with Special Needs

WHO WE ARE

The Canadian Legal Network for Children with Special Needs is a non-profit society dedicated to:

- promoting the rights of children with special needs and their access to justice
- enhancing the legal remedies available to children with special needs

HOW WE DO IT

- promoting quality legal representation and excellence in advocacy
- promoting implementation and enforcement of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child
- encouraging lawyers and lay advocates to increase their involvement and representation on behalf of children with special needs

BACKGROUND

Although Canadian society has come a long way, huge barriers remain for children with special needs, both in achieving substantive rights and in securing procedural safeguards.

Discriminatory practices and stigmatizing attitudes and behaviours abound.

The peculiarities of the Canadian constitution also leaves children "caught in the middle", or, perhaps more accurately, "falling in the gap" created by the division of powers between provincial and federal governments.

Children are entitled to a free and appropriate public education. However, the child may not be identified as having special needs, or, if identified, may have to wait for most of the school year before an IEP is issued. Then the IEP may not be implemented. The Network believes in strengthening the voice of the child through effective advocacy and in promoting accountability through effective enforcement mechanisms in the school system.

Children with special needs may also experience discrimination in their ability to access health care and other public services.

ACTION IS NEEDED

The Network believes in the need for law reform in order to make real changes for children in general and children with special needs in particular.

The Network aims to provide information and advice to parents and children as well as information and training to advocates and lawyers.

The Network recognizes the accumulated experience held by parents and children themselves and believes that practitioners can learn and benefit from those experiences.

The Network undertakes research aimed at promoting and enhancing the rights of children in general and children with special needs in particular.

The Network also publicizes and promotes important legal research done by others, for example by highlighting and reviewing new articles, books or projects through its website and newsletters.

The Network reviews case law as well as policy developments across the country in order to give members an easily accessible source of reliable information.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

The Network is entirely independent of government funds and thus relies on membership dues in order to remain viable.

If you are interested in joining and supporting the Network, please fill out the form below and submit it along with your payment.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

- ☐ Associate member (\$25.00)
- ☐ Full member (\$50.00)
- ☐ Benefactor member(\$250.00)
- ☐ Organization (\$250.00)

Make cheques payable to:

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