



first call

Key Four: Safe & Caring Communities

First Call is a partner in the [Economic Security Project](#), a joint initiative of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA-BC) and Simon Fraser University. The Economic Security Project is a five year research project that was launched in January 2004, and is focused on examining how public policy changes in BC have affected the economic well-being of British Columbians and particularly vulnerable populations, including children and families.

As of May 2006, CCPA-BC has published 10 reports and studies as part of the Economic Security Project as well as numerous press releases, editorials, and “Behind the Numbers” fact sheets; many of these are relevant to the work of First Call and its coalition partners, particularly in relation to three of First Call’s Four Keys to Success for children and youth:

- Support for youth transitions
- Safe and caring communities
- Increased economic equality.

An overview of the findings of the Economic Security Project that focus on public policy changes affecting youth transitions in BC and links to these publications is provided below.

Safe and caring communities include supervision and safe working conditions for young people who have jobs. Recent public policy changes mean that children as young as twelve can work with only the written consent of one parent (children younger than twelve can work with the permission of the Employment Standards Branch).

[Eroding Worker Protections: BC’s New ‘Flexible’ Employment Standards](#) outlines the changes to legislation governing the employment of children made in 2002 and 2003. This report emphasizes the neglect of BC’s most vulnerable workers, including young people; it concludes that BC now has “minimum standards of protection that are lower than anywhere else in Canada.”

The vulnerability of young workers, particularly those aged twelve to fourteen, is outlined in [Survey of Young Workers Should Prompt Rethink of Child and Youth Employment Standards](#). This press release states study findings that young workers are not receiving adequate supervision, parental evaluation of their workplace safety, or written parental approval to their employer as necessitated by the Employment Standards Act.

The details of this study can be found in [Child and Youth Employment Standards: The Experience of Young Workers Under BC’s New Policy Regime](#), which reviews the number of hours worked by children and young people, the impact of working on their school performance, and wages paid to young workers, including a discussion of the \$6 an hour first job/entry level wage.

Follow these links for more information on the Economic Security Project and findings related to [support for youth transitions](#) and the [economic equality](#) of families with children.