

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2019 9:15 TO 11:30 AM

**PRESENT:**

Bronwyn Armstrong, Office of the Representative for Children and Youth BC  
Carol Madsen, Parent Support Services Society  
Caroline Kent, BCGEU Comp 3  
Danella Angus, Parent Support Services Society  
Darren Usher, BC Association of Social Workers  
Dave Scott, BC Retired Teachers Association  
Erika Cedillo, Inclusion BC  
Etti Goldman, Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs  
Galen Hutcheson, Parent Advocacy Network  
Garrett Jones, McCreary Centre Society  
Gyda Chud, First Call Steering Committee  
Heather Lynch, Options Community Resources Society  
Janet Fraser, Vancouver School Board

Jean Moore, First Call Steering Committee  
Jim Staton, Family Services of Greater Vancouver  
John Millar, Public Health Association of BC  
Katarina Jovanovic, Vancouver Community College  
Katherine Moore, First Call Steering Committee  
Lin Chen, Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada  
Margie Sanderson, Society for Children and Youth of BC  
Marlene Adam, University Women's Club of Vancouver  
Nicky Bowman, BC Society of Transition Houses  
Taylor Morton, Equitas  
Todd Patrick, BC Teachers' Federation  
Adrienne Montani, First Call  
Becky Kelly, First Call  
Emily Chan, First Call  
Halena Seiferling, Living Wage for Families/First Call

Helesia Luke, First Call  
Leila Trickey, Living Wage for Families/First Call

**CALL-IN:**

Jessica Forster Broomfield, DIVERSEcity  
Caroline Donelle, DASH BC

**REGRETS:**

Brynn Joyce, BC Federation of Students  
Dylan Cohen, First Call, Fostering Change  
Kim Schmidt, UBC/BC Children's Hospital Research Institute  
Mike Lally, DIVERSEcity  
Sharnelle Jenkins-Thompson, West Coast LEAF  
Tom McLaughlin, BC Children's Hospital

**1. WELCOME, RECOGNITION OF INDIGENOUS LANDS, INTRODUCTIONS, AGENDA**

Cheryl Mixon, chairing, acknowledged we are meeting on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh and Squamish Nations, followed by a round of introductions.

**2. #ALLONBOARD CAMPAIGN FOR AFFORDABLE PUBLIC TRANSIT - VIVECA ELLIS, BC POVERTY REDUCTION COALITION**

Viveca Ellis presented this [Powerpoint](#) to share more information about the #AllonBoard Campaign. She explained that in her role with [Single Mothers' Alliance of BC](#), she was meeting with single mothers whose biggest concerns were access to child care, housing, and transportation. They couldn't attend some events due to inaccessible transportation. She also heard similar calls through the [Community Action Network](#).

The campaign calls for free transit for youth 0-18 and sliding scale pass based on income. At the moment, the campaign is focusing on the free transit for youth 0-18 as the sliding scale would require means testing and would therefore become a more complicated process. They are trying to shift the narrative on transit from a commodity to an essential public service. There are many inequities within the current transit system, including that people from marginalized communities are racking up fines for fare evasion, and there are no repayment alternatives in place to paying the large amounts, such as community service.

**putting children and youth first**

One aspect of the campaign is the Youth Leadership Initiative, funded by the Vancity Community Foundation in fall 2018. The initiative built capacity among young leaders and it had a huge positive impact on the campaign. Campaign results have included putting the issue onto the agenda of the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation. The Council was supportive of the campaign but only if the province covered the costs. The goal of the #AllOnBoard campaign is public investment from the BC Government.

To support #AllOnBoard, organizations are encouraged to officially [endorse](#) the campaign. The campaign is also looking for organizations that might want to partner around a listening session. To share the campaign on social media, the hashtag is #RaiseARider. They are also looking for folks to join their organizing committee. Please contact Viveca Ellis at [viveca@bcpovertyreduction.ca](mailto:viveca@bcpovertyreduction.ca).

**Q:** What is the progress for endorsements from the City of Vancouver? Perhaps it would be useful to present to the city's Child and Youth Advisory Committee?

**A:** The motion was passed by the City of Vancouver in January. #AllOnBoard would be happy to present to the C&Y Advisory Committee as well.

### **3. FIRST CALL UPDATES/ CALLS TO ACTION**

#### **Early Childhood Development Roundtable**

At our October 30<sup>th</sup> ECD Roundtable meeting, we had a presentation from Khalilah Alwani, Maternal and Child Health, Ministry of Health. The ministry is currently working on updating publications and service frameworks incorporating new language on social emotional health and gender identity. They are also funding an increase in training for Indigenous doulas through the BC Association of Friendship Centres. The integrated, multi-disciplinary service teams in schools, announced in the BC mental health plan, are being developed first in Comox and Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows schools, with plans for expansion across the province. They include social workers, child and youth care workers, school professionals and other care providers in the community.

Karen Isaac, from BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS), shared information about their leadership work rolling out the coordination and implementation of the federal Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework. BCACCS is distributing federal funding for supporting 203 First Nations' with community planning and elder involvement under the Framework. They are making a point of reaching smaller communities who have been underserved. They have also distributed wage enhancement funding for 101 licensed and unlicensed child care programs, affecting 458 Early Childhood Educators.

#### **Fostering Change Campaign**

The third annual Policy Solutions Day happened on October 23, 2019. 55 youth attended and participated in 28 meetings with 14 Cabinet Ministers, 10 MLAs, and other individuals. We pushed to ensure that the \$500-1000 budgeted for home set-up for youth aging out of care is actually being distributed to the youth. We also pulled data from the [2018 Youth Homeless Count](#) and the [BC Coroners' Death Review Panel](#) report to hold the government accountable to the urgency of supporting youth aging out of care.

Susan Russell, Campaign Organizer, highlighted that some of the meetings included the Auditor General's staff who are looking into increased funding for youth from care, the Liberal caucus who will follow up on the recommendations that government accepted. The Ministry of Children and Family Development commented that they bend legislation on a case-by-case basis and the advocates clarified their ask for an overhaul of the system. They also met with Attorney General David Eby who discussed a proposal for youth who have transit fees to incrementally pay back fees at a very low rate, e.g. \$1/month, in order to unblock their access to getting a driver's license. Minister of Education Rob Fleming discussed youth in care receiving better support when self-reporting in schools and will come to Vancouver to finish the conversation with the advocates.

Our creative campaign action included cardboard cut-outs of some Cabinet Ministers in a family photo, in recognition that when children and youth are in care, their family is the government itself. Susan thanked Options Community Services, Aunt Leah's, and SFU's Teaching Support Staff Union's Solidarity and Social Justice Committee for their financial support of the day. [Note: This campaign work has been funded by a Vancouver Foundation grant and a grant from a donor through Vancity Community Foundation.]

### **Campaign 2000 / Child Poverty Report Cards**

We have to postpone the production of the 2019 BC Child Poverty Report Card because we have not received all the data in time from Stats Canada. This is affecting the national report card and other provinces too. We aim to publish on January 14, 2020, as releasing partial data, followed by the rest later would lose impact.

**Comment:** You could consider framing the report card release and recommendations as New Years resolutions.

### **Living Wage for Families Campaign**

There continue to be additional municipalities interested in the campaign, including Burnaby and Victoria. This week is Living Wage week, so we are publishing a series of blog posts on our [website](#) to dive deeper into our living wage calculations. As a reminder, we also have [resources](#) for different kinds of employers in a variety of sectors and industries. The Campaign had a Strategic Planning session last week and the Employer's Committee will be considering new Living Wage Employer applications later this month.

Our 3-year participatory action research project (Making Ends Meet) just received ethics approval. The research is to gain a better understanding of low-wage work on individuals and families, and policy advocacy for the working poor. We are currently recruiting participants and peer researchers. Please contact Leila Trickey, Research Coordinator, at [leila@livingwageforfamilies.ca](mailto:leila@livingwageforfamilies.ca), if you are interested.

### **First Call Fundraising Gala**

A reminder that the [First Call Fundraising Gala](#) will be held on Thursday, February 27. We are looking forward to hearing from our keynote speaker, Dr. Melissa Lem, on the impacts of the climate crisis on BC children and youth. We are currently seeking event sponsors and items for our silent auction. [Please contact](#) Emily Chan, Office and Engagement Coordinator, with any suggestions. [Click here](#) for our sponsorship package.

### **Child Labour Standards Project – Government consultation**

At the October Coalition meeting we mentioned that the Ministry of Labour put out a public survey asking for feedback on developing new regulations under the Employment Standards Act governing allowable work for children and youth. Some of the survey questions reflect pressures on Government from lobby groups looking for exemptions from the new rules. We had a meeting with the Deputy Minister and will send in a submission soon. We are advocating for an evidence-based approach to formulating the new regulations, including the consideration of injury data from WorkSafeBC and other sources.

### **Kids Can't Wait Community Gathering**

There were 60 people in attendance at the October 29th event, including a good mixture of parents, advocacy groups, service providers, etc. Event sponsors included Inclusion BC, BC Association for Child Development and Intervention, Richmond Society for Community Living, Inclusion Langley Society, Family Support Institute of BC, BC Centre for Ability and First Call. Participants discussed the long wait-time crisis across the province and how to use trauma-informed practices to create a community of practice.

The gathering focused on four themes for building an action plan: building strong collaborative approaches between ministries and community agencies; family-centred, capacity-building service approaches to help keep families together; sufficient capacity and resources to meet families in a timely way (services funding); and equitable access and resources for families when they're needed.

First Call Coalition meeting minutes, November 13, 2019

The sponsoring groups hope to continue connecting with BC parents of kids with complex needs and raise awareness of children who receive support from the At Home program. A full report from the Community Gathering should be ready soon.

### **Human Rights Tribunal feedback on self-complaints by minors**

Our submission is [available on our website](#). Special recognition to Helesia Luke, Communications and Development Coordinator, for her hard work on writing this submission. The proposal to allow minors to make human rights complaints in their own name and repeal the definition of age (currently 19 years) in the Human Rights Code has many implications, such as whether children and youth can be held to a mediated settlement, how capacity will be judged, and inequities in access to this administrative process. Our submission summarized the input received from coalition members and suggests more work and discussion is needed on these proposals.

## **4. FEDERAL ELECTION RESULTS AND IMPACTS FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES**

With the federal election now over, various campaigns relevant to the well-being of children, youth and families that were active in the campaign period are now putting out calls to action to inform and influence the new government. [Child Care Now](#) launched a new initiative to urge federal party leaders to work together to meet the child care needs of all. The [Coalition for Healthy School Foods](#) has a series of letters that can be sent to federal party leaders. The Canadian Labour Congress has continued to focus on the campaign for a national [Pharmacare](#) program. The [Done Waiting](#) campaign calls to end wage discrimination and sexual harassment and violence, and fix the child care crisis.

It's too early to know what federal programs or policies will be changing. Some organizations are hopeful that federal child care funding will continue as promised by the last government and others hope funding for immigrant and refugee settlement programs will continue. The Living Wage for Families Campaign had an [op-ed in the Tyee](#) about the federal minimum wage in federal party platforms.

## **5. MEMBER UPDATES AND ISSUES FOR FUTURE COALITION MEETING AGENDAS**

**John Millar** promoted the Green New Deal for Canada as it connects to climate change, the erosion of democracy, and growing inequality between rich and poor. The changes will need all of society on board, including those at the community level.

**McCreary Centre Society** is hosting their Annual General Meeting on December 5 on the topic of youth vaping. There is also an opportunity for youth transitioning out of care to [participate in a longitudinal study](#).

**The BC Retired Teachers' Association** had an Annual General Meeting in September and reminded us of the [Golden Star Awards](#) (deadline April 15) to recognize public school programs that focus on the interaction between BC students with seniors.

**Society of Children and Youth's legal centre** continues to run at Ray Cam Community Centre and through their office building twice a month. They are also hosting a [celebration fundraiser](#) on November 20 on National Child Day. They also recently set up an [Instagram account](#).

**The British Columbia Government and Service Employees' Union** joined a delegation of Early Childhood Educators to meet with 32 MLAs to discuss the child care crisis. The \$1 wage enhancement is appreciated, but it doesn't make enough difference to encourage people to join the field.

**The University Women's Club of Vancouver** is hosting their [annual Christmas at Hycroft event](#) tomorrow. They are hosting a [Hycroft Lecture](#) on November 26 featuring Michèle Audette, Commissioner, National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls.

**Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada** has [a new project](#) to work with children from birth until Kindergarten for assessments and screening for children with vision loss.

**The BC Teachers' Federation** is currently in contract negotiations. November is anti-poverty month and their action teams put together four weeks of activities for teachers. They just finished their second session on racism.

**BC Council for Families** has two new training opportunities available. The [Mother's Mental Health Toolkit Training](#) and [Inclusive Trauma Informed Practice: Using the Creative Process](#).

The **Family Services of Greater Vancouver** Fundraiser Soiree was a great success! They raised \$175,000 and will change the theme next year.

The **BC Society of Transition Houses** has a new funding project called [Cedar Blankets](#). The project aims to increase access to transition houses for Indigenous families and will create a blueprint for other agencies to use.

**Inclusion BC** is currently working on their submission for the [BC Government Engagement on Accessibility through Legislation](#).

**Parent Support Services of BC** is looking for Steering Committee members to join their [Indigenous Circles](#). They are also conducting [research on kinship families](#), with a survey and key-informant interviews and focus groups around the province. There are concerns around the Infant's Act which allows health care providers to keep information from parents about what's going on with their children.

**Options Community Services** – Surrey/White Rock Integrated Youth Services Team is working towards getting a Foundry centre in Surrey in collaboration with 19 different organizations engaging youth and parents. Options has submitted a report regarding youth access to services to MCFD.

The **Representative of Children and Youth** has put the Rights Tour on hold due to fiscal limitations. There have been drastic changes to the tuition waiver program and encourage people to contact their offices for more information.

**DIVERSEcity** is participating in a peer review process and just received ethics approval. They are in the process of negotiating their federal funding contracts.

## **6. MEETING ADJOURNED**

### **Time and date of next meeting**

The next coalition meeting will take place Wednesday, December 11, 2019, 9:15–11:30 am. Refreshments are served at 9:00 am. BC Teachers' Federation, 550 West 6th Avenue in Vancouver. Telephone participation welcome; please contact us by the Monday before the meeting at [info@firstcallbc.org](mailto:info@firstcallbc.org) if you wish to participate by phone.