

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Resilience in Action:

Advancing Children's Rights Through Challenging Times



firstcall
CHILD AND YOUTH
ADVOCACY SOCIETY





**We believe in putting
children and youth first.**

About Us

Our Vision

The rights of BC's children and youth are respected, and they have the opportunities and resources required to thrive.

Our Mission

To uphold the rights of BC's children and youth through research, public education, community mobilization and public policy advocacy.

How We Work

We conduct research and analysis on child and youth rights and well-being, offer education and training events, and make policy recommendations to advocate, promote, strengthen and defend the rights of children and youth in BC.

What We Do

First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Society is a registered non-profit charity in British Columbia. Our purpose is to create greater understanding of and advocacy for legislation, policy, and practice so that all children and youth have the rights, opportunities and resources required to thrive.

Executive Director

Adrienne Montani | Executive Director

Board Members

Jim Staton | Chair
Cheryl Mixon | Vice Chair
Gyda Chud | Secretary
Emily Mliczko | Treasurer
Cleta Brown | Director
Maira Mackenzie | Director

We

...raise the public profile of child and youth issues through public education and the dissemination of research.

...advocate on public policy issues in order to have resources allocated for the benefit of children and youth.

...recognize the value of involving children and youth in decision-making processes.

...mobilize local and provincial support for children and youth.



Our 4 Keys To Success

We believe that to promote the health and well-being of children and youth, they and their families need the following:



**A Strong Commitment
to Early Childhood
Development**



**Support in Transitions
from Childhood to
Youth and Adulthood**



**Increased
Economic Equality**



**Safe and Caring
Communities**

Year In Review

Message from:

Adrienne Montani,
Executive Director

Jim Staton,
Chair, Board of Directors

First Call has been standing up for the rights and well-being of children and youth in British Columbia for 30 years—and our work is more vital than ever. In 2024, we marked the 35th anniversary of the federal government’s 1989 all-party pledge to end child poverty in Canada. Yet here we are, in the 28th year of producing our annual BC Child Poverty Report Card, still calling attention to the urgency of unmet promises.

This report card and all our work, made possible through the ongoing support of our dedicated supporters, is a core part of our work to hold governments accountable. In a year when economic pressures deepened for so many families, our research helped tell important stories—like our feature on the realities facing single mothers trying to make ends meet in an increasingly unaffordable province. We also launched new projects, such as our latest major research initiative focused on housing, another key factor in the lives of children and youth that demands urgent action.

First Call’s advocacy is grounded in strong partnerships. Our network of affiliates and supporters strengthens

and amplifies our collective voice. Whether we’re working on advocacy for increased income supports for low-income families, collecting data on funding cuts to immigrant settlement programs for families with children in BC, or participating in the Human Trafficking Prevention Network of BC, we bring a child- and youth-centred lens to every policy conversation.

Behind every statistic is a child, a family, a community striving for dignity and opportunity. Our mission is to ensure those voices are not only heard but also acted upon. Alongside our dedicated Board of Directors and staff, we’re proud of how we’ve grown and deepened our impact as a registered society—while continuing the legacy of nearly three decades of advocacy.

We remain committed to convening, researching, mobilizing, advocating and speaking out for legislation and policy change—because every child deserves the opportunity to thrive.

In solidarity for children and youth,

Adrienne and Jim

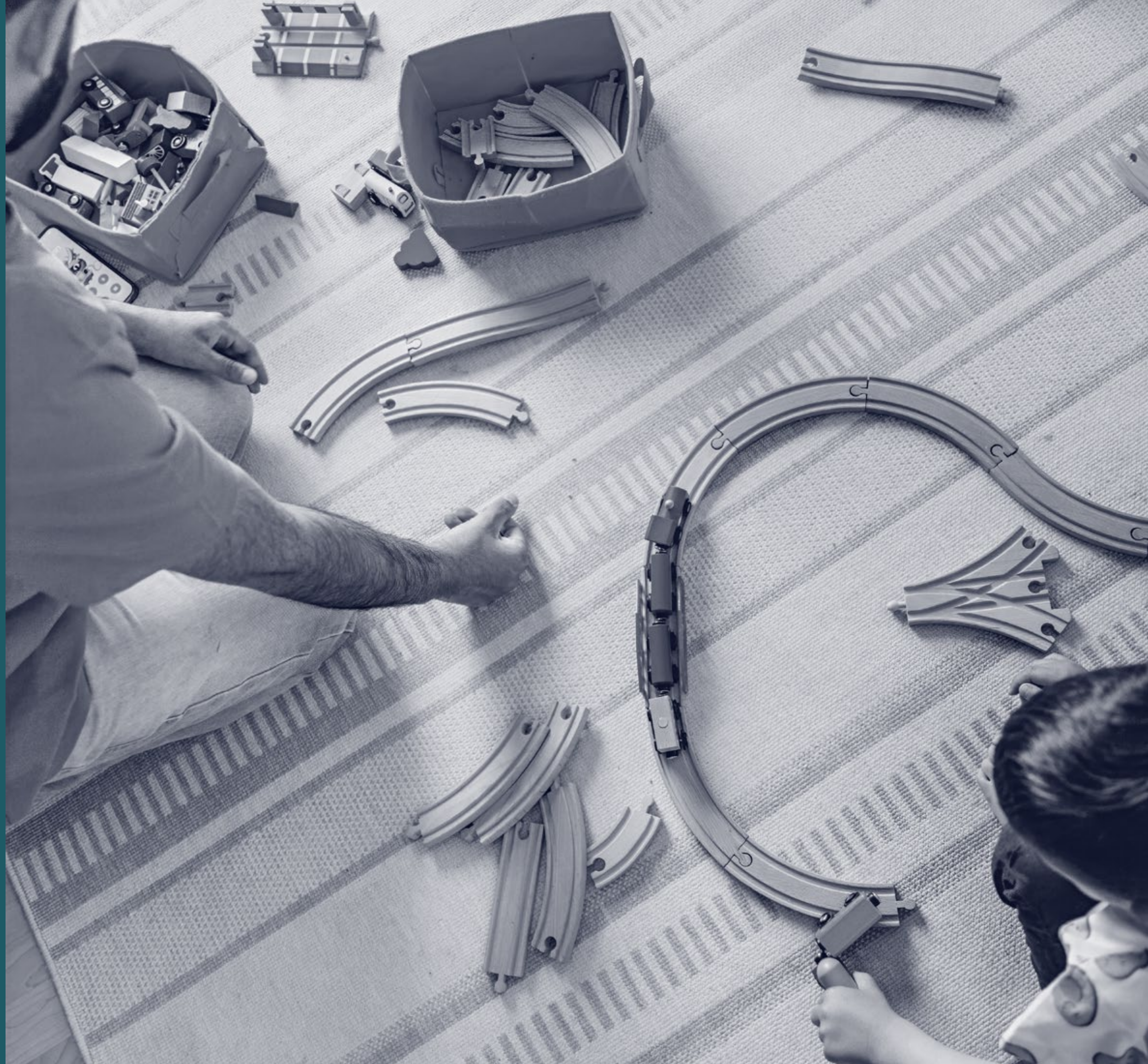


2024 First Call Accomplishments

In 2024, First Call continued to press forward with determination and impact, in the face of economic uncertainty and increasing pressures on families and communities.

As an individual organization and in tandem with our affiliate network and partners across sectors, we showed what is possible when advocacy, collaboration, and commitment converge. From shaping policy conversations at every level of government, to publishing new research and resources, to strengthening the public voice for children's rights, our work did not slow down—it grew.

These achievements are not just markers of persistence in difficult times; they are proof that investing in advocacy during downturns is more important than ever. Whether initiating new impactful research programs, continuing the pooling of resources, knowledge, and influence, we are able to tackle root causes, advance real solutions, and keep moving toward a province where every child and youth can thrive.





Policy Change in Motion

Advocacy to Government of BC

First Call participated in consultations and made submissions to the Government of BC Ministers, staff and MLAs on multiple occasions on the issues of child poverty and family housing. We advocated via in-person meetings, letters, annual budget briefs and gave advice in meetings with government representatives.

Advocacy Highlights: Other Levels of Government

- Government of Canada: Repeal S.43 of the Canadian Criminal Code (physical punishment)
- Government of Canada: Passage of Private Member's Bill C-291 (changing the term "child pornography" to "child sexual abuse and exploitation material" in federal legislation)
- Government of Canada: Budget 2024 Submission
- City of Vancouver: VSB School Trustees, to increase on-site child care

Public Advocacy

First Call's research and advocacy work combines rigorous analysis with the experience and insights of our affiliate network, ensuring that decision-makers and the public have clear, credible evidence to act on. In 2024, even in challenging economic times, we advanced recommended solutions that address root causes and inspire change—because when children and youth thrive, our whole province moves forward.

- **Reducing child poverty** through stronger income supports, universal services, and targeted initiatives for families most affected.
- **Expanding access** to quality, affordable child care for more BC families
- **Strengthening supports** for children and youth with disabilities and those in or from government care.
- **Securing children's rights** to safe housing, healthy school meals, and equitable public education for every learner.
- **Protecting children and youth from harm**, including homelessness, exploitation, violence, and online risks.
- **Improving family supports** through reforms to parental leave, Employment Insurance, and the Canada Disability Act.
- **Investing in early supports** such as Infant Development, Supported Child Development, and Young Parent Programs.

Adding and Amplifying Our Voices

First Call on Special Committees

In 2024, First Call’s knowledge and advocacy efforts were recognized across a range of influential forums. By contributing our research and perspectives, we helped shape discussions and decisions on poverty reduction, housing, child protection, and equity. These invitations affirm that First Call is relied upon as a trusted voice for children and youth in BC.



- **BC Member**, Campaign 2000, National Steering Committee
- **Advisor**, The Office of the Representative for Children and Youth, Circle of Advisors for the Systemic Review of Child Serving System
- **Member**, Government of BC, Social Development and Poverty Reduction Minister’s Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee
- **Member**, The Lt-Governor of BC’s Human Trafficking Prevention Network
- **Member**, BC Employment Standards Coalition
- **Member**, BC Coalition to End Youth Homelessness
- **Member**, SPARC BC Climate Equity Advisory Committee

A Trusted Voice
at the Table



Knowledge that
Fuels Change

Research Reports and Special Projects

In 2024, First Call’s research, educational initiatives and communications initiative reached across BC to inform policy, support our affiliates and engage the public.

From in-depth reports to webinars, seminars, and conference presentations, our work equips communities and decision-makers with the insights they need to advance children’s rights.

The following highlights capture the breadth and reach of this vital work.



Educational Presentations

Research and Education: Active Tools That Make Impact



- Joint webinar with UBC’s Human Early Learning Partnership
- Langara College, Social Service Worker program
- The Federation of Community Social Services of BC Social Policy Forum
- Housing Central Conference
- Inclusion BC Everybody Belongs Conference
- New Westminster Townhall on Child Care
- Tamarack’s Communities Ending Poverty Community of Practice
- Vancouver Coastal Health Medical Health Officers
- Cause We Care Foundation Board of Directors
- University of Victoria Law Class

Communications Outreach and Engagement



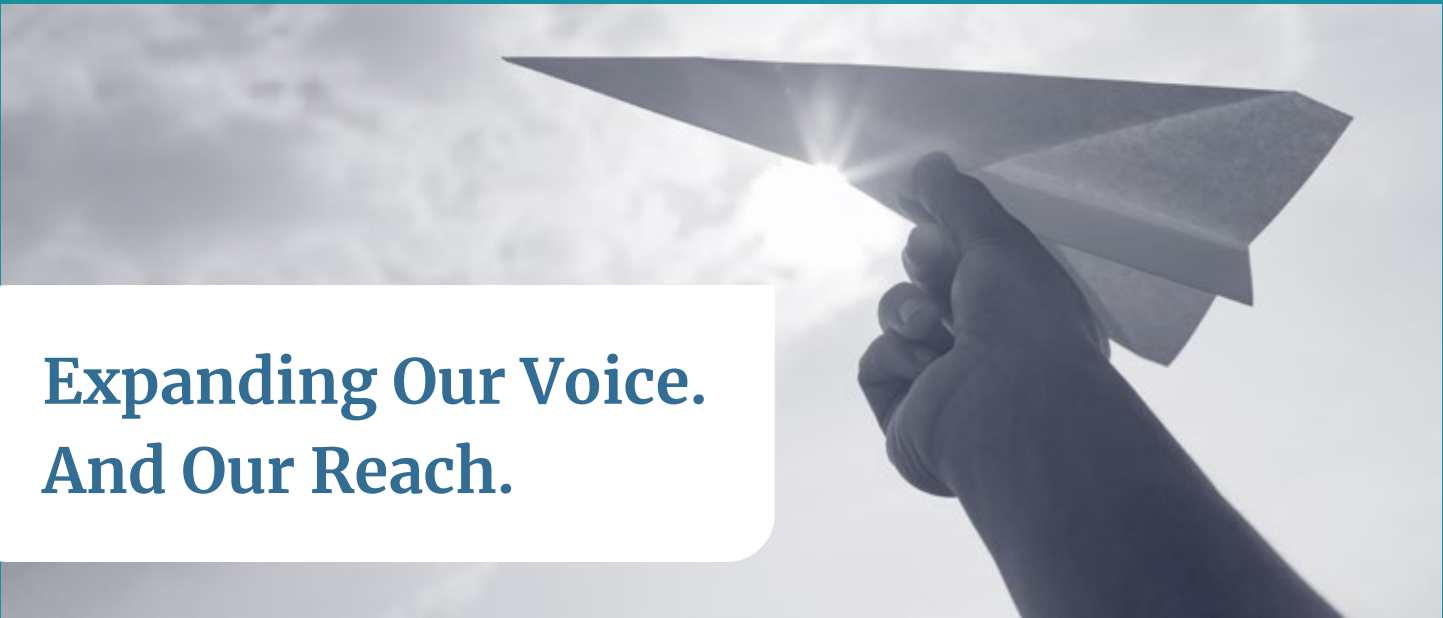
- 13** affiliate member meetings (Network and Early Childhood Roundtable)
- 1** Survey to the affiliate network developed and conducted
- New** collateral materials and exhibition materials developed



- 60+** media hits on media releases that supported the rollout of our reports and other projects
- 1** OpEd in Vancouver Sun, October
- 1** Feature article on determined single mothers in Vancouver Sun, December



- New** technology adopted to improve online donation capabilities and additional capacity building
- New** website redesign with new information
- New** redesign and expansion of monthly newsletter



Expanding Our Voice. And Our Reach.

Stronger Than Ever

Resilience is not just survival—it is momentum. With supporters, affiliates, and allies, we are ready for the challenges ahead. Together, we can ensure every child in BC has the chance to thrive.



Building the Next Chapter Together

Funders & Supporters

We gratefully acknowledge financial support from:



Con Brio Foundation

Our Affiliate Organizations

Donations from individual supporters

Please Donate to Our Work

Please join us on this journey to a healthier and more equitable future for all our children and young people in BC.

Help us amplify the call for better policy for children, youth, and their families by becoming a monthly donor to our charity. Your donations and bequests will help us to put children and youth first in BC.

First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Society is a registered Canadian charity – #772217469 RR 0001. Tax-deductible receipts are available.

DONATE TODAY

You can donate online:

Go to www.firstcallbc.org/get-involved/donate/ with credit card or bank transfer.

You can send a cheque to:

First Call Child & Youth Advocacy Society
#328 – 3381 Cambie Street
Vancouver BC V5Z 4R3

You can send an e-transfer to:

Send to email info@firstcallbc.org
Please include in your e-transfer message box:
Your full name, Email address, Mailing address
(We require the above information in order to follow up with a tax receipt)

Subscribe to our Newsletter

Don't miss the latest child and youth news and updates on our projects and campaigns! Subscribe to our newsletter, The Child and Youth Advocate, on our website and sign up to receive meeting notifications at www.firstcallbc.org

Attend Our Meetings

First Call's Early Childhood Development (ECD) Roundtable and Network Meetings bring together advocates to discuss issues, plan strategies and take actions that serve our children, youth and families. Everyone is welcome to attend the meetings.

Find Us On Socials

Follow us on  [LinkedIn](#) and  [Twitter/X](#)

Contact information

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Website: www.firstcallbc.org



firstcall
CHILD AND YOUTH
ADVOCACY SOCIETY

30 *Years*
1995-2025

Land Acknowledgement

We work on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō (Stolo) and Səlílʷətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) nations