

# LET'S PUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ON THE AGENDA: AN ELECTION TOOLKIT



**Children across Canada and the world have had a tough couple of years. The combination of COVID-19, climate change and rising conflict has had a devastating impact on children's rights to quality education, health, nutrition and protection from violence.**

Children who were already facing inequities including Indigenous children, girls, refugee children and LGBTQI children have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. This reversal of decades of

hard-fought progress carries significant risks that connect us all, not only in the short-term but for the next generation. Healthy, safe, educated children are essential to any recovery plan for Canada and for the world.

It is more important than ever that we speak up for and with children to protect their rights and invest in their futures. The Canadian Federal election is a critical opportunity to insist that candidates and political parties put children's rights at the top of their agenda.

## SIX WAYS YOU CAN BE A CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN THIS ELECTION

### 1 Learn what your local candidates stand for

It is important to get to know the candidates running for election in your riding. This research will help you during conversations with the candidate and will also help inform your decision when it is time to vote.

To find out who your local candidates are type your postal code into the search bar located on the

**ELECTIONS CANADA WEBSITE** [CLICK HERE >>](#)

You can then follow them on social media and visit their web pages to learn more about them and what they stand for.

Once you know who your candidates are you also need to make sure you know about the parties they represent.

To learn about each party's priorities read their election platforms:

 <b>LEARN MORE</b>	<b>BLOC QUÉBÉCOIS</b> 
 <b>LEARN MORE</b>	<b>CONSERVATIVE PARTY</b> 
 <b>LEARN MORE</b>	<b>GREEN PARTY</b> 
 <b>LEARN MORE</b>	<b>LIBERAL PARTY</b> 
 <b>LEARN MORE</b>	<b>NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY</b> 

**2**

## Reach out to your local candidates

Send an email, telephone or drop by the office of your local candidates to introduce yourself as a voter and share which issues matter most to you. Candidates want to hear from you and will be excited that you reached out.

### In your outreach make sure to:

- ✓ Tell them **WHAT** issues you care about (like children's education, protection and health).
- ✓ Explain **WHY** it's important (Children's rights are human rights).
- ✓ Outline **HOW** they can help (improve policies and commit to funds that support children in Canada and around the world).

**3**

## Attend a debate

During a debate, candidates are provided the opportunity to express and debate their political views in a public forum. The holding of debates is an important means through which voters receive information about the positions of the various candidates and parties. This information can be crucial in helping voters decide whom to support.

Debates are also a great opportunity to participate in a public forum and ask a question to the local candidates around children's rights. By asking your candidates a question in a public space, it holds the candidate accountable on these issues.

### Sample questions to ask in a debate or meeting with candidates

***"What will your party do to better support Indigenous children's rights in Canada should your leader become Prime Minister?"***

***"What is your party's plan for recovery in the Canadian children's education system?"***

***"Will your party increase Canadian aid to support children's rights and needs globally should your leader become Prime Minister?"***

***"What will your party do to ensure a global response and recovery plan for the world from COVID-19?"***



## 4 Be prepared for a door knock

Candidates want to know what their constituents are concerned about so don't be surprised if you get a knock on the door from a candidate looking for your support. This is your opportunity to express your concerns regarding children's rights.

### Sample key messages:

Children around the world were already facing a triple threat to their rights from conflict, climate change and food insecurity. The COVID-19 pandemic has made things even worse, especially for the most marginalized children like girls, children with disabilities and refugee children. We must move quickly to ensure all children in crisis are reached and supported so a generation of children is not left behind. Will your party increase the Canadian aid budget should your leader become Prime Minister?

Not all children's rights are equally realized in Canada, and those most deprived of their rights are First Nations, Metis and Inuit children. Currently the poverty rate for Indigenous children is at an alarming 40%. Indigenous children have the right to develop to their full potential as valued and engaged citizens within their Indigenous nations and Canada. Will your party commit to meaningfully address Indigenous child inequality and discrimination and advance the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada?



## 5 Engage in social media

Many of your local candidates will have social media profiles and are actively engaging on a daily basis. They want to hear from you directly so reach out to them via social media and raise your voice online. Do not be afraid to like, retweet, or reply to opinions that you are in support of or against.

### Sample social media posts:

Great meeting today with [add candidate @handle "name"] to discuss Canada's role in ensuring every last child will fulfill their right to survive, learn and be protected from harm. [use hashtags relevant to election]

I would like to see a boost in Canada's international assistance spending, including humanitarian aid, in order to address the needs of children in crisis. [add candidate @handle "name"], We must move quickly to ensure these children in crisis are reached and supported.



**6****Vote!**

Make sure your voice is heard by voting on election day.

[You can find the official information regarding the election as well as how to register to vote here >>](#)

### Key Resources:

Find inspiration and information in the links below so that you can help the candidate understand why children's rights are so important.

 <b>REPORT</b>	Protect a Generation – The Impact of COVID-19 on Children's Lives	
 <b>STORIES</b>	Children Standing Strong in the Face of Crisis	
 <b>BLOG</b>	Celebrate and Learn More about the People and Programmes Advancing Indigenous Children's Rights	



Disclaimer: Save the Children is a non-partisan organization and does not endorse any electoral candidates or federal parties

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