

Groups intend to take new Bill of Rights to government

**For immediate release
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FREDERICTON, NB: In celebration of National Child Day November 20, 2014, groups in New Brunswick announced their intention to take a new Bill of Rights to government for enactment. The Bill would protect children's health from environmental hazards such as pervasive toxic chemicals in our air, water, food and consumer products, as well as the impacts of climate change.

So far, Canadian icons Raffi and David Suzuki, as well as respected researchers, physicians, twenty-four organizations and over 200 individuals in Canada and beyond have signed on to support this historic Bill of Rights.

The David Suzuki Foundation recently featured the proposed Bill at an event in Saint John in September, as part of its cross-Canada Blue Dot Tour to promote the right to a healthy environment for all Canadians. Suzuki said, "It is time for Canada to join more than 110 nations that recognize their citizens' right to live in a healthy environment. The proposed Bill of Rights to protect Children's Health from Environmental Hazards is a powerful and positive step towards recognizing our environmental rights at all levels of government in Canada."

Raffi Cavoukian, singer, author, founder of the Centre for Child Honouring and New Brunswick's Champion for Children's Environmental Health, helped to launch the proposed Bill to the public in June at the Fredericton Regional Family Resource Centre.

"Taking the Bill to government for enactment is the logical next step," Raffi said. "This proposed Bill of Rights affirms our duty to nourish and nurture the young to the best of our ability as a society. The Bill emboldens our efforts to create caring communities that support the healthy development of children. And it strengthens our efforts to provide safe environments—both indoors and outdoors—wherever children live, learn, play and grow. That's why we need this Bill of Rights."

Sharon Murphy of PEACE NB said that there is now sufficient evidence that exposure to air and water pollution, food contamination and exposure to toxic chemicals in consumer products are causes of chronic childhood diseases including asthma, leukemia, birth defects, childhood obesity, Type 2 diabetes, brain cancer and brain injuries which are expressed in developmental delays, learning disabilities, lower IQ scores and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

Murphy continued, "By protecting the health of our children, we protect ourselves. Children are far more vulnerable to toxins and to the effects of climate change than adults. We have a duty as adults to protect our children, as they are unable to protect themselves. And, protecting children's environmental health will save countless health care dollars. In many ways, healthy ecosystems benefit both present and future generations".

The Bill was initiated by the New Brunswick Children's Environmental Health Collaborative in 2009. It was drafted in consultation with the New Brunswick Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, Ecojustice and East Coast Environmental Law, with input and support from the Centre for Child Honouring, the Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick, the Fredericton

Regional Family Resource Centre, PEACE-NB and the New Brunswick Lung Association.

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NOTE: High resolution photos available on request



PEACE NB



<http://nben.ca/childrens-rights>