



## UNICEF CANADA CHARTER FOR CHILDREN

- 1. Pay attention to issues affecting children:** There are seven million children in Canada. But there's no one in the federal government with the primary responsibility to think about them. There is no Minister for Children, no Children's Commissioner, no parliamentary children's caucus or committee to ensure the impacts on children are considered in legislation, policy and services.

*Will you champion an independent or parliamentary voice for children?*

- 2. Give children the best start:** In 1989, the House of Commons unanimously resolved to eliminate poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000. Yet close to 600,000 Canadian children spend their childhoods in poverty, with profound and lasting impacts on their health, safety and future prospects. Canada has one of the largest income gaps between have-and have-not children among the industrialized countries.

*Will you champion closing the child poverty gap in Canada?*

- 3. Close the gap in life chances for Aboriginal children:** Many First Nations children on-reserve suffer when federal and provincial/territorial governments can't agree which level should provide the services to these children that are available to other Canadian children. For example, Jordan River Anderson wasted more than two years of his life - unnecessarily - in hospital while governments argued over who should pay for his at-home care. In 2007, the House of Commons unanimously passed a motion in support of Jordan's Principle: when a jurisdictional dispute arises over government services for a First Nations child, the government of first contact pays the bill and resolves the jurisdictional issue later. To be effective, all provinces/territories and the federal government must fully implement Jordan's Principle.

*Will you champion the full implementation of Jordan's Principle?*



- 4. Tell us what you spend:** It's not clear what federal and provincial governments spend on children, and if it's sufficient and equitable. All governments in Canada claim to spend significant resources on children, but the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development reports that Canada invests considerably less than many other industrialized nations. The details of annual federal expenditures and transfers to provinces for children and the impact of each budget on children should be publicly reported in a "children's budget".

*Will you champion a clear and transparent means of publishing federal and provincial expenditures for children?*

- 5. Do our fair share:** Millions of children in developing countries lack access to health care, education and protection. They are denied a childhood, and their potential is dimmed. Eleven donor countries, including Sweden, Norway, France and Great Britain, have reached their commitment to invest 0.7 per cent of their Gross National Incomes in development assistance, or have timelines to do so. Canada, with the healthiest economy amongst G-8 countries, invested only about 0.33 per cent of our GNI in 2010.

*Will you champion efforts to reach the 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income target by 2015?*

- 6. Save lives:** With only four years left to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the world has failed to sufficiently invest in the health of women and children. We have made less progress towards MDG 5 (improving maternal health) than any other goal. As a result, millions of preventable mother and child deaths occur every year. At last year's G8 Summit, world leaders pledged increased investment for maternal, newborn, and child health.

*Will you champion this critical global effort to save lives and improve maternal, newborn and child health?*

