



FAIRNESS FOR CHILDREN

CANADA'S CHALLENGE

Earlier this year, UNICEF released *Report Card 13: Fairness for Children*, which ranks the depths of inequality in child and youth well-being across the world's richest countries. The report reveals how far our nation's most disadvantaged children are allowed to fall behind the "average" child in areas like health, education, income and life satisfaction.

HERE'S HOW CANADA'S CHILDREN RANKED:

Canada is one of the most unequal societies for children and youth

Canada ranks 26 out of 35 of the world's richest nations. A wide gap exists between the average Canadian child and the most disadvantaged. Children in the poorest families have fewer than 53 percent of the financial resources that the average child has, drastically limiting their opportunities for a bright future.

One in four Canadian children aren't feeling their best on any given day

The proportion of children in Canada who report one or more health complaints every day is 23 percent. These issues unequally affect our most disadvantaged children. Frequent health complaints are usually an expression of stressful situations or relationships at home, at school, or among peers. More attention needs to be paid to the stress children face and the resources required to help them.



UNICEF Canada/2010/Sri Utami

Education is the great equalizer for Canadian children

Our public school system helps to buffer the socio-economic disadvantages that some children face, creating a more even playing field for those who might otherwise be left behind. For vulnerable student populations like young newcomers, Canada creates a more equal environment giving them greater opportunities to succeed.

Poorer children report lower life satisfaction than children who are better off

When asked to rate their lives on a scale of zero to 10, where one is the 'worst possible life for me', a full nine percent of Canadian children rated their lives a four out of 10. Children with low life satisfaction are three times more likely than their peers to experience fighting, be victims of bullying and smoke regularly. This is a disturbing statistic that we must address.

We all have a role to play in improving the lives of children and youth in Canada – our own and other children – and this includes listening to children and youth about what they think is needed to address the challenges they face.

LEARN MORE

To learn more about child well-being in Canada, please visit unicef.ca/irc13.