



Faculty of Law, University of Toronto, February 27 - 28, 2009

A Multi-Disciplinary Conference sponsored by the Canadian Coalition on the Rights of Children;
Faculty of Law and David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights, University of Toronto;
UNICEF Canada; and Justice for Children and Youth.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Day 1 Thematic Sessions: Friday, February 27

NOTE: All events on February 27th take place in the Bennett Lecture Hall in Flavelle House at the Faculty of Law, University of Toronto

8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. Arrival and Registration: Flavelle House, Faculty of Law

8:45 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. Opening Remarks and Keynote Address

Keynote Speaker: Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, British Columbia Representative for Children and Youth

9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Panel I: Meaning and Interpretation of the Best Interest Principle

Nick Bala, Faculty of Law, Queen's University

Jeffery Wilson, Wilson Christen Barristers LLP

Justice June Maresca, Ontario Court of Justice

Chair: Kathy Vandergrift, Canadian Coalition on the Rights of the Child

10: 45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Health Break

11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Panel II: Best Interests and Participation

Young People Talk about their Experiences

Rachel Birnbaum, Faculty of Social Work, University of Western Ontario

12:15 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. LUNCH

1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Panel III: Best Interests and Other Interests (Parental Rights, Culture, Public Security)

Anne McGillivray, Faculty of Law, University of Manitoba

Lorraine Derocher, SODRUS, University of Sherbrooke

Tara Collins, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa

Chair: Nigel Fisher, President & CEO, UNICEF Canada

2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Panel IV: Best Interests Applied to Children as a Group

Senator Raynell Andreychuk

Mark Sieben, Associate Deputy Minister, B.C. Ministry of Children & Family Development

Tina Tam, Executive Director, Society for Children and Youth B.C.

Chair: Landon Pearson, Landon Pearson Resource Centre for Children's Rights, Carleton University

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Health Break

3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Panel V: Best Interests and Canada's Constitution

Cheryl Milne, Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights, University of Toronto

Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society

Claire Bernard, Legal Counsel, Commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse, Quebec

Chair: Carol Rogerson, Faculty of Law, University of Toronto

4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Introduction and Preparation for Day 2 Workshops

Day 2 Workshops: Saturday, February 28

NOTE: The workshops on February 28th take place in various rooms in the Faculty of Law, Flavelle House. Rooms will be assigned at registration.

9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. Keynote Address (Bennett Lecture Hall)

Keynote Speaker: Bernard Richard, New Brunswick Child and Youth Advocate

10:15 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Concurrent Workshops:

- Immigration
- Voices of Children in Family Law
- Health Care
- Education
- Aboriginal Children

12:00 – 1:30 LUNCH and Plenary

Plenary Presentation: Papers in Brief – Various presenters will speak to current research and practices relevant to the best interest principle.

1:30 – 3:30 p.m. Concurrent Workshops:

- Child Welfare,
- Adoption,
- Youth Justice
- Early Childhood Education
- Cultural & Religious Practices

3:30 – 4:00 p.m. Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Please visit www.unicef.ca/bestinterestconference more details and updates.