

Hamilton Children's Charter of Rights

Children, like other human beings, are entitled to fundamental rights and freedoms. Because of their unique vulnerability, it is incumbent upon adults and the communities in which they live, to ensure of the society's resources. While parents have the primary responsibility for their children's care and upbringing, the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child makes it clear that governments have a duty to help protect the rights of the children. Not only is this the right thing to do but local and national evidence has clearly demonstrated it is the best investment in our future.

All Our Children:

1. Have the right to preserve and maintain their ethnic, cultural, spiritual and/or religious identity: and to be protected from racism and discrimination.
2. Are entitled to a standard of living that ensures healthy physical, intellectual, cognitive, emotional, and social development and a good quality of life.
3. Must have adequate nutrition on a daily basis.
4. Must have housing which is safe, secure, accessible and appropriate for healthy development
5. Are entitled to spend sufficient time with their families and/or other nurturing and positive role models throughout their childhood.
6. Will have access to quality child care/early education programs designed to ensure the healthy development of that child.
7. Are entitled to receive "holistic education" and or training or apprenticeships to enable them to reach their full potential.
8. Are entitled to a continuum of education and resources and leisure activities, in the form of play, creative expression and/or skills development.
9. Will have access to recreational resources and leisure activities, in the form of play, creative expression and/or skill development.
10. Are entitled to the highest attainable health, and the assurance that the resources necessary to ensure life-long good health are available and accessible.
11. Have the right to be served by governments, at all levels, which demonstrate their responsibility to improve the health and well-being of children and work co-operatively to ensure adequate funding and policies for children's programs.
12. Have the right to be protected from physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect both in the home and community.

The foregoing rights shall apply to all our children without discrimination according to race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, ability/disability, ethnic origin, region, property or class, religion, source of income or any other distinction. This may entail the use of affirmative action equity programs in order to redress situation of special individual, community or regional disadvantage.

- *Accessible refers to physical and financial accessibility.*
- *Families may include: parents, legal guardians, relatives and caregivers*
- *Holistic education refers not only to established academic subjects, but also to the study of areas such as: art, music, health, vocations, and physical education.*
- *Highest attainable level of health as defined by the World Health Organization*

Endorsed by Hamilton Regional Council May 16, 2000
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