
INTRODUCTION

By learning and sharing knowledge, we collectively strengthen our communities, our societies and the world. A commitment to learning is fundamental to Canadian innovation. At its core, innovation is about crafting new ideas to improve our lives.

– His Excellency the Right Honourable DAVID JOHNSTON,
Governor General of Canada

THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH (NACY) IS A DIVERSE, cross-sectoral coalition of agencies and organizations across Canada that support and work with children, youth, and their families. NACY was created to further knowledge, as well as provide research and expertise in a broad range of matters related to children and youth, driven by its vision of a Canada in which all children and youth thrive. Today NACY continues to pursue opportunities for collaborative work and strategies to support and enrich the lives of young people and their families.

NACY's partnership with *The Philanthropist* on this special issue releases the findings from the "Taking Stock" project that focused on "how Canada's children and youth agencies are responding to economic challenges," and supports the dissemination of this work to a wide and diverse audience across Canada.

During the winter of 2014–2015, *The Philanthropist* will begin release of this special issue through a staggered publication of three articles that focus on the changing and diverse needs of children, youth, and families across Canada. In order of release, these articles will be:

- An Action Framework for Children and Youth in Canada
- Taking Stock: How Canada's Children and Youth Agencies Are Responding to Economic Challenges
- Moving Forward – Addressing the Challenges Faced by Canada's Child- and Youth-Service Organizations

This special issue is intended to support the development of more collective and collaborative efforts to enhance the lives of children and youth in Canada by presenting both a comprehensive picture of the current state of their well-being and strategies for further action that reflect a broad consensus among those serving the needs of children and youth.

In the world we can never know absolutely what is the case, but we can know enough to take action, (Small Countries Big Ideas, Cognitive Edge, 2014).

The board of directors of the National Alliance expresses its gratitude to our members and partners, and the young people who contributed time, leadership, expertise, and lived experience to the development of this work.

The National Alliance for Children and Youth (NACY) is a coalition of agencies and organizations from across Canada who support and work with children, youth, and their families. For complete information about NACY and for a list of the working group members who produced this report, please visit www.nacy.com . Email: info@nacy.ca .