

National Child Day celebrates children's right to play

The City of Edmonton proclaimed November 20 *National Child Day* in recognition of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). The theme of National Child Day 2014 is *The Right to Play*, which recognizes a child's right to leisure, recreation, rest and play that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated.



"Play is not just fun. It helps build our society. Through play, children learn to solve problems, make decisions, connect with peers, regulate their emotions, appreciate themselves as individuals, and become more resilient," said Councillor Michael Walters. "Our great city can be a wonderland for children, but only if barriers to play are removed. Today, we come in the spirit of community building so that play can be enjoyed by all."

Each year, the City of Edmonton, through its [Child Friendly Edmonton](#) initiative, works with families and community partners to ensure Edmonton's children and youth have the support, encouragement and respect necessary to reach their full potential.

Edmonton celebrates National Child Day each year to mark two historic events:

- The 1959 signing of the United Nations [Declaration of the Rights of the Child](#), and
- The adoption of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) in 1989.

Endorsed by more countries than any other human rights treaty in history, *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* outlines the basic human rights of children and the commitment society makes to provide and protect those rights.

"Play is an important child's right and is key to healthy childhood development. Unfortunately, there are young people who have a limited opportunity to regularly enjoy play," said Del Graff, Child and Youth Advocate for the Province of Alberta. "We encourage all young people and their guardians to learn about the basic human rights young people are entitled to, and to take the time to participate in some of the events for National Child Day."

The Edmonton National Child Day Collaborative includes:

- Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (OCYA)
- The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities
- Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research
- YMCA of Northern Alberta
- [Success By 6](#)® United Way of the Capital Region
- Boys & Girls Club, Big Brothers & Big Sisters
- Child Friendly Edmonton (City of Edmonton)
- John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights
- Edmonton Early Years Coalitions
- EMap
- Edmonton Public Library
- MacEwan University
- Alberta Recreation and Parks Association
- Edmonton Public Schools
- Edmonton Catholic Schools.

In honour of National Child Day 2014, the High Level Bridge will be lit in blue this evening.

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