



BC Association of Social Workers
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November 21, 2023
For immediate release

BC SOCIAL WORKERS, FIRST CALL SOCIETY CALL ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO REPEAL CRIMINAL CODE SECTION ALLOWING PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT OF CHILDREN

(Vancouver) BC's professional social work association and BC's leading child and youth advocacy society are calling on British Columbia's members of parliament to end the legal defence to assault that justifies physical violence against children by parents and other persons of authority.

Member of Parliament for New Westminster Peter Julian's private member's Bill C-273 - An Act to amend the Criminal Code (Corinne's Quest and the protection of children) passed first reading in May 2022 and it will return to the House of Commons in the next few weeks for debate. The bill amends the Criminal Code by repealing Section 43, a provision that authorizes the correction of a child by force if certain criteria are met.

"Physical punishment of children is still legal in Canada, even though more than sixty-five countries around the world have banned the practice" said Adrienne Montani, Executive Director of First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Society (First Call). "There is extensive research demonstrating that physical punishment is harmful to children's development and well-being."

The BC Association of Social Workers (BCASW) and First Call have launched an online letter writing campaign urging their members and the public to contact their members of parliament asking them to support C-273 when it comes to the floor of the House for a vote.

"Canada must prioritize the protection and well-being of children and pay attention to the research on the clear negative impacts of physical punishment" said Michael Crawford, BCASW president. "It is past time to remedy this human rights violation and modify our laws to show children of all ages the same respect we expect them to show us."

The organizers of this campaign are hopeful that the growing recognition of the rights of children and our shared understanding that physical punishment is ineffective and harmful has created an environment that will lead members of parliament to support Bill C-273.

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Online letter-writing campaign is available here –

<https://act.newmode.net/action/bc-association-social-workers/repeal-43>

First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Society is a registered charity in British Columbia whose purpose is to create greater understanding of and advocacy for legislation, policy, and practice so that all children and youth have the rights, opportunities and resources required to thrive.

The BC Association of Social Workers is a voluntary, not-for-profit membership association that supports and promotes the profession of social work and advocates for social justice. BCASW is one of the provincial/territorial social work associations in partnership with the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW). Through CASW we support the work of the International Federation of Social Workers. BCASW was incorporated in 1956 and has branches and members (including students) throughout BC.

BCASW and First Call acknowledge that we work in the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and that our members and colleagues live, work, and play in unceded territories across British Columbia. We respect the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant communities.