



CHILDREN FIRST
CANADA

Raising Canada 2020:

The impact of COVID-19 on children and harnessing data to drive change

Sara Austin, Founder & CEO

National Network of Child & Youth Advocacy Centres
December 10, 2020



Children deserve the best we have to offer during times of peace and prosperity, and even more so during times of crisis.



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COVID-19 AND THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN

TOP 10

**THREATS TO
CHILDHOOD**

AND THE IMPACT OF COVID-19



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Harnessing data with leading experts

The Raising Canada report was produced in partnership with:

- Statistics Canada
- The O'Brien Institute for Public Health
- The Alberta Child Health Research Institute

The report also leveraged the thought leadership and subject matter expertise of CFC's Council of Champions, including Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre

#1	Unintentional and preventable injuries
#2	Poor mental health
#3	Child abuse
#4	Poverty
#5	Infant mortality
#6	Physical inactivity
#7	Food insecurity
#8	Systemic racism and discrimination
#9	Vaccine-preventable illnesses
#10	Bullying

All top 10 threats to children are worsening, or at risk of worsening, as a result of the pandemic.



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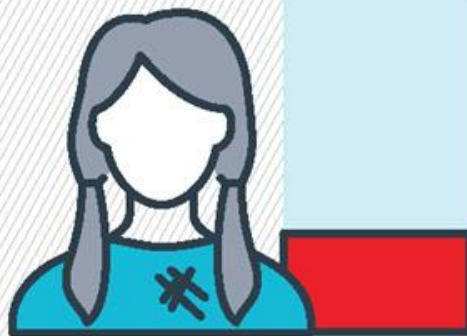


There are **8 million** children in Canada, and **1/3** of them do not enjoy a safe and healthy childhood.



1 in 3

Canadians have experienced abuse before their 15th birthday.



1 in 5

children live in poverty.



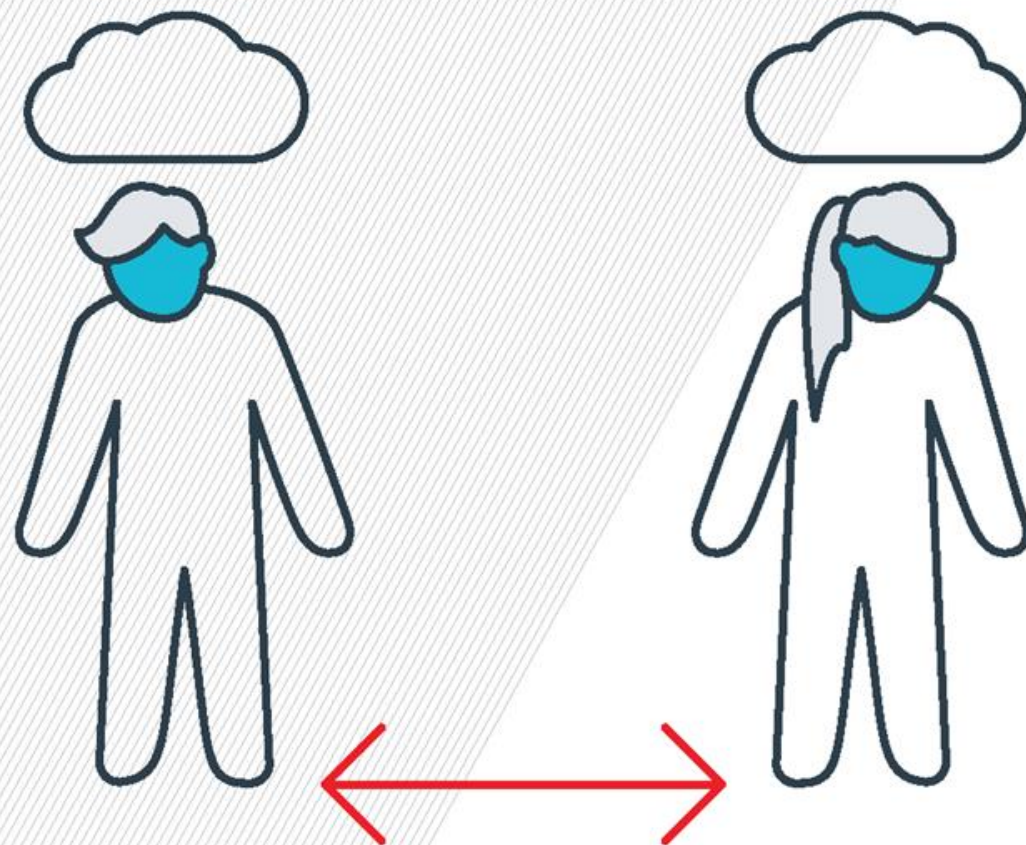
Suicide is now the **leading cause of death** for children aged 10 to 14.



Mental health

for children aged 15 to 17

Crowdsourced data suggests that **57% of participants** reported their mental health was **“somewhat worse”** or **“much worse”** than it was prior to physical distancing measures during the pandemic.





Violence against children

In Canada, Kids Help Phone has reported an

increase

in specific conversations

about **physical,**

sexual and

emotional abuse.

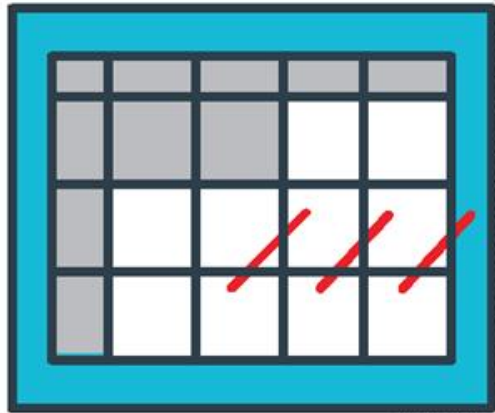


As kids go back to school, reports of suspected child abuse may increase, since children will be interacting with trusted adults in their schools.



Missing school: big worries

for children aged 10 to 17



3 in 10 put the prospect of **missing out on more school** next year at the top of the list.

Worries about **losing class time** this year and next are higher among teenagers (aged 13-17), whose **graduation** or preparation for graduation are affected.





Going to school online for children aged 10 to 17



75% say they feel they are keeping up.

That doesn't, however, mean that they're enjoying it:



6/10 say that they **dislike it**
6/10 say they feel **unmotivated**

(Angus Reid Survey, 2020)

NATIONAL LOCKDOWN & THE IMPACT TO EDUCATION

- Inequitable access to childcare and education
 - Patchwork of approaches across the country
 - Lack of access to technology & bandwidth
- Schools as a gateway to other rights (protection from violence, mental health, food security, physical activity, recreation/play, etc.)
- Loss of employment for parents caring for children and supporting educational needs
- Children's lack of involvement in policy making and decisions around returning to school





1

Appoint a federal
Commissioner for
Children and Youth

2

Create a national strategy
to tackle the top 10
threats to children in
Canada and ensure the
full protection of children's
rights

3

Publish a children's
budget that includes
dedicated resources to
address the top 10
threats to children in
Canada, as well as \$250
million to mitigate the
impact of COVID-19 on
children

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**THREATS TO
CHILDHOOD**

**HERE'S
HOW YOU
CAN HELP:**

1

**Sign the
Raising Canada
Call to Action**

2

**Spread the
word on
social media**

#RAISINGCANADA

#RINGTHEALARM





BILL S-210

Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada Act

Senator Rosemary Moodie's Public Bill S-210 would establish the Office of the Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada.

The Commissioner for Children and Youth in Canada would have a mandate to advocate for the promotion and protection of the rights and well-being of children and youth, particularly those who belong to a vulnerable group.

RETURN TO SCHOOL AND THE SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19



**BACK TO SCHOOL
AND COVID-19:
NEW POLL**

18%

**OF CANADIAN PARENTS HAVE HAD
TO WORK FROM HOME BECAUSE
THEIR CHILD WAS UNABLE TO GO TO
SCHOOL IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS.**





**ABOUT 960,000
CANADIAN PARENTS HAD TO MISS
WORK BECAUSE THEIR CHILD WAS
UNABLE TO GO TO SCHOOL IN THE
PAST FEW WEEKS.**



13%

**OF CANADIAN PARENTS HAVE A
CHILD WHO HAS BEEN SENT HOME
FOR COVID RELATED SYMPTOMS**



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ABACUS DATA



83%

OF CANADIAN PARENTS WHO HAD A CHILD TESTED FOR COVID-19 SAY IT HAS TAKEN 1 DAY OR MORE TO GET THE RESULTS BACK.





ABOUT 600,000
CANADIAN PARENTS HAD TO QUIT
WORK OR CHANGE WHERE THEY
WORK BECAUSE OF CHILDCARE OR
SCHOOLING CHALLENGES IN THE
PAST FEW WEEKS.



14%

OF CANADIAN PARENTS HAVE A CHILD WHO IS IN A SCHOOL THAT HAD A COVID-19 OUTBREAK.



ANNOUNCEMENT:

**Children First Canada
and StatsCan
partnership**

Understanding the impacts of
COVID-19 on children and families



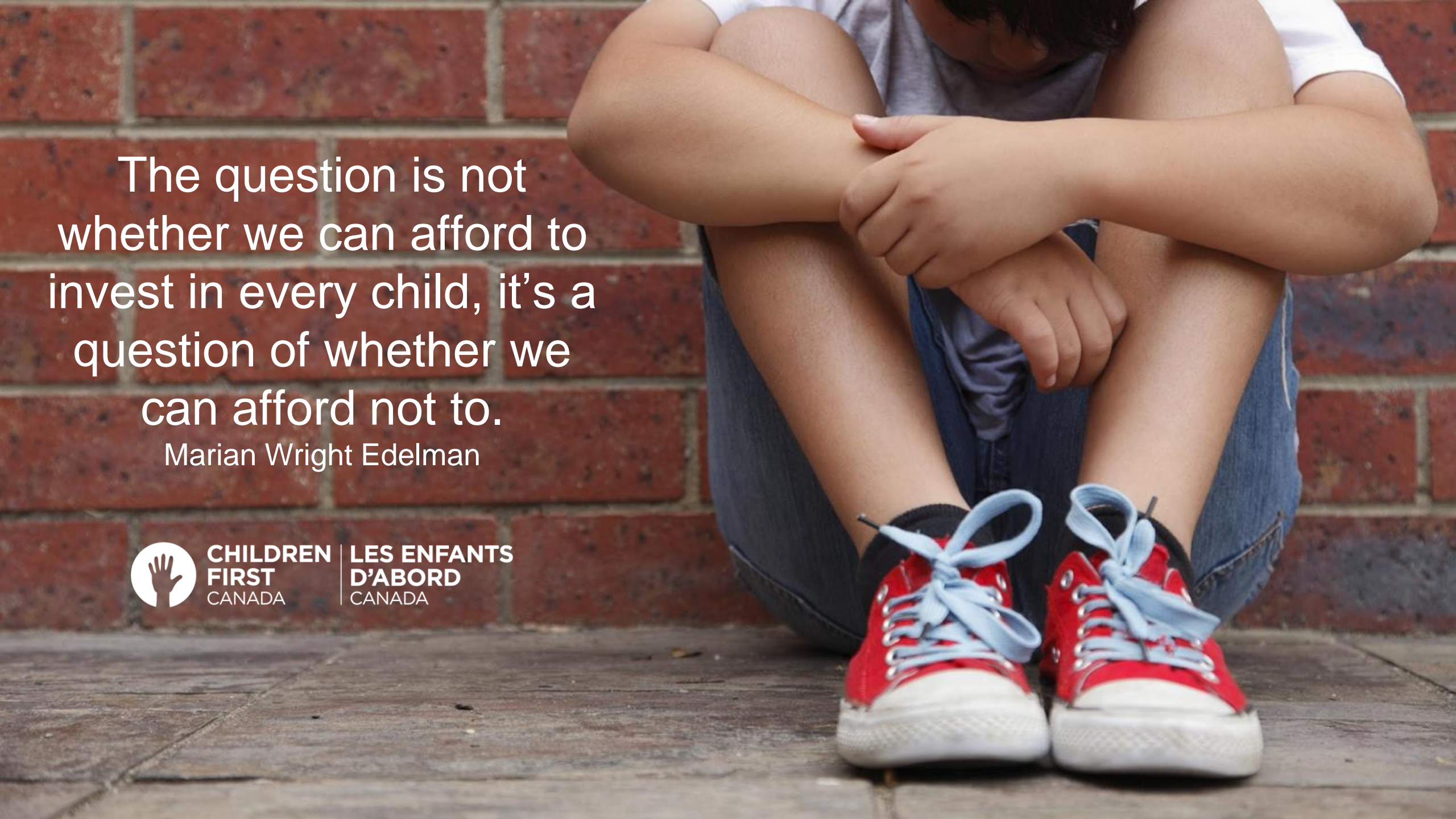
Children First Canada is partnering with StatsCan to better understand the impacts of COVID-19 on children and families.

This process will connect Canadian children and youth with industry leaders and decision-makers. Now more than ever, we need to act with children, not for them.

Stay tuned for more information in January!

Gaps and Opportunities

- Reporting on the impact of the crisis on violence against children
 - Gaps in national, provincial and local data
 - No single source of truth (ex. How to report)
- Coordinated advocacy response with clear messages for:
 - Policy makers
 - Parents
 - Teachers
 - Children
- Pending election in Spring 2021



The question is not
whether we can afford to
invest in every child, it's a
question of whether we
can afford not to.

Marian Wright Edelman



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