



**Report out of the meeting of the  
Canadian Coalition for Immigrant Children and  
Youth (CCICY)**

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**November 28, 2007, Ottawa**

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## **Canadian Coalition for Immigrant Children and Youth November 28, 2007, Ottawa**

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**Participants:** See Appendix A

**Facilitator:** Joan Riggs, Catalyst Research and Communications

### **A. Welcome and Opening**

The two co-chairs, Barbara Burnaby and Hieu Van Ngo opened the meeting. Barbara provided an overview of the history of CCICY, acknowledging the work that has been done to date and the partners and supports the organization has received.

Barbara emphasized that the reason that CCICY was created is to address the education needs of immigrants by creating collaborative dialogue between the two levels of government who have those two responsibilities. Currently, the federal government has responsibility for immigration and the provinces have responsibility for education.

As a National Coalition, CCICY has faced many challenges including the need for funding and a structure to support the work. Each province is working on the issue in different way, utilizing different structures and CCICY has much work to support the work of the provinces while working towards a collaborative approach.

### **B. Presentation of the Report**

Joan Riggs provided a brief overview of the key findings of the Report. The report was used to introduce different parts of the agenda and provided a detailed summary of the work done by CCICY to date.

### **C. Vision**

Participants were broken into four groups to develop a vision for CCICY. The question was posed, "What would Canada look like if CCICY was successful in its work?" Each group created a picture of the country if it was focused on achieving the CCICY mandate. The verbal descriptions of the visions cannot capture the beauty of the visual images that often included symbolic imagery of love, home and belonging.

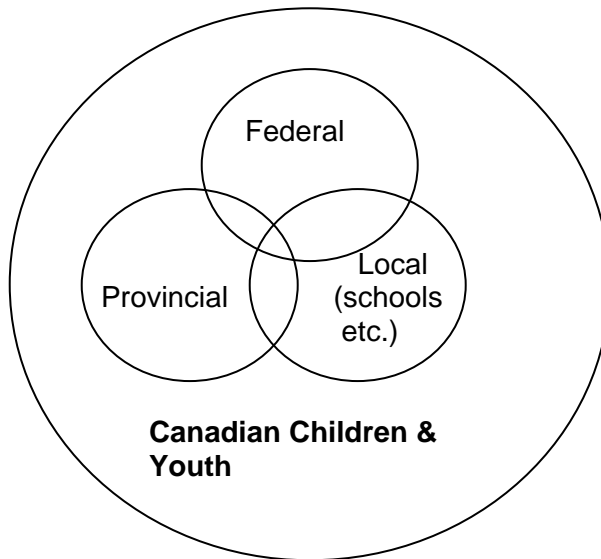
**Group 1: The federal and provincial governments and organizations working together to address the needs of immigrant and Canadian children**

There are resources and investments in Canada in three different contexts in Canada, all of which are interconnected:

- a) in the home.
- b) In the schools
- c) In the community

These three key elements of society are interconnected to ensure employment, good housing, and a strong healthcare system that supports families to raise their children in a good way. Children are at the centre of society and the goal is to have them become contributing members of society.

**Group 2: Working together with children and youth as our focus**



The focus is on the four circles working together to ensure that children and youth can realize their potential. New programs exist in communities across Canada to support children. There are new ways of ensuring dialogue and collaboration between the different levels of government and the community.

**Group 3: Dialogue is our key tool as we work to make institutions transformative and inclusive.**

Canada is a very fortunate country and continues to have many diverse people enjoying the Canadian experience. A country that is aware of and recognizes their gifts and talents greets immigrants when they arrive. Different institutions in the country (represented by different tents) have developed ways to make organizations transformative and inclusive.

CCICY continues to play a key role in facilitating talking, listening, advocacy, sharing to make all Canadian institutions really inclusive and transformative.

Children experience themselves in their new country as “special” and wanted. Every child who is bearing emotional scars from the immigrant or refugee journey is given the supports they need to move forward.

CCICY is working with others towards an integrated Canada where people can develop individually and develop a strong sense of their connection to their community.

**Group 4: Equity representation is in every aspect of Canadian society**

Every aspect of life in Canada: government, institutions, economy, the Arts, media and schools have equity representation. Newcomers have access to the wide range of institutions. ECE is an integrated program in society because it is a key vehicle to ensure access to society.

CCICY, in 10 years, has been so successful that the organization is helping the US or France.

***Summary Vision:***

In ten years, every aspect of Canadian society will reflect the diversity of Canada. The education system will support children and youth to be contributing members of Canadian society.

CCIYC will promote information-sharing, dialogue and collaboration amongst all stakeholders to achieve our vision.

**D. Current Resources**

Before the discussions of what CCIYC would identify as priorities, a review of the current resources available was reviewed.

***Funding:***

- No independent funding
- Some foundation funding for specific meetings
- Specific program and project funding through individuals and organizations

***Communication Tools:***

- Website
- Newsletter
- Network of relationships

**Tools/Activities:**

- Literature review
- Interest groups

<b>E. Strategic Priorities</b>
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The group had the opportunity to identify key priorities for CCICY. A wide range of issues was identified (see Appendix B) that were then narrowed down to reflect priorities that CCICY could achieve.

Four general areas were identified for focus and a general area

- a) Networking
- b) Advocacy
- c) Communication
- d) Research
- e) Other

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**A. Strategic Priorities**

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Given the current resource base, CCICY wanted to be very focused on what was achievable at this time. Three strategic priorities were proposed for the next year.

**1. Establish a network hub that shares information**

- a. Share successful practices.
- b. Develop a resource list (programs and resources)
- c. Identify research and consultation priorities
- d. Highlight research that uses children's and youth voices.
- e. Track and highlight key research in the area.
- f. Continue the newsletter

**2. Develop specific advocacy positions and lobby on:**

- ESL and ELD funding
- Transition programs prior to school to prepare children for school entry.

**3. Develop the language and key communication messages to articulate CCICY issues.**

## B. Other Strategic Issues

Other issues considered important but not chosen as strategic priorities for CCICY were approached in other ways.

<b>Strategic Issue (not chosen as a CCICY priority)</b>	<b>How it will be addressed</b>
1. Pre-migration training – recognition of Canada’s values vis- a-vis violence, women, children and human rights	Raise this issue with other organizations that are working on this issue.
2. Longitudinal study – It will include the Canadian context; 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation participants; survey factors and tracking trends	A national study is already underway. CCICY will track the report and put on the website the results and reports.
3. Include children and youth voices in the methodology and design of research.	Promote that in any of the work that CCICY is involved in.
<p>4. Conference – The goals of the conference would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Share best practices</li> <li>b. Create a national strategy dialogue</li> </ul> <p>Participants will include ESL teachers, settlement workers, government stakeholders, academics and non-immigrant services</p>	At this time, this is not a viable strategy to undertake.
5. Strategize and advocate on how to change immigration bureaucracy,	Pass idea forward to the Canadian Council for Refugees
6. Establish surveys/questions for newcomers who have gone through programs in order to identify successes and areas to improve.	

## **F. Structural Options**

Four structural options were proposed in the Report for the consideration of CCICY. While a final decision was not made, the group did indicate a preference to further explore two of the options (Option 1 and 2 below). In both cases, it would require CCICY to initially be sponsored by an established organization.

A Partnership Protocol working group was established to initiate discussions.

### **Options**

1. CCICY would be sponsored by an established organization (suggested organizations would be CISSA or CCR) Over the long term, CCICY would grow to become a formal coalition of individuals and organizations.
2. CCICY would be sponsored by an established organization (suggested organizations are University of British Columbia or University of Guelph.)
3. A membership based organization with representation seats on the Board
4. CCICY would be sponsored by an established organization with the long term goal of being a membership based organization

## **G. Communication messages**

The participants were asked to brainstorm in small groups some key messages that CCICY could communicate.

- The Coalition cares about children and youth. It seeks to assist children with regard to education, socio-cultural and psychological aspects. We look at well-being from a wholistic view.
- An advocate for immigrant children and youth. We are concerned with the wellbeing of immigrant children and youth. We promote jurisdictional coordination to address the unique needs of immigrant children and youth in all aspects of their lives.
- Why CCICY exists:
  - To eliminate barriers and impediments to their full inclusion
  - Build wholistic development of the immigrant child
  - To improve immigrant children's opportunities and their families to grow as independent self-sufficient persons
  - Provide arena and space for networking and partnerships

- Support and allow families to regain their lives and values
  - To provide information and links to those existing resources working with immigrant youth and to provide support in terms of proposal writing.
  - To advocate on behalf of immigrant children and youth for the provision of services
  - To make resources accessible to parents
  - To create a forum/partnerships with families and communities
- What does CCICY do?
    - To provide support and advocacy for immigrant children and youth for their integration and well being
    - To work towards policy change
    - To share best practices amongst various institutions that serve children and youth to ensure equity and positive outcomes
    - To collaborate with other community agencies and organizations,
    - How to prepare for citizenship/sense of belonging
    - Inter-generational dialogue

## H. Next Steps

Working groups were identified to follow-up on the actions out of the meeting.

### **Messages**

Peter  
Tony Lovnik  
Sylvia Bereskin

### **Coordination**

Barbara  
Jacqui Strachan  
Ives Clarke

### **Partnership Protocol**

Hieu  
Barbara

### **Early Childhood Blog**

Roma Chumak-Horbatsch

### **Newsletter**

Sonia  
Bre England

### **Advocacy**

Jennifer  
Wali Farrah  
Maryse Bermingham

## I. Close of the Day

The final thoughts in the closing round was that there is a need for a strong national voice and the group would like to see CCICY grow. It is important to keep the focus that “every child is sacred.”



<b>Appendix A</b>
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### Contact List

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
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**Appendix B**

**Issued identified that CCICY could work on – as part of the  
priority setting process**

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**A. Networking**

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**1) Share successful practices**

- Being a network hub to disseminate best practices.
- Share and exchange best practices.
- Share what is happening in the rest of Canada.
- Develop resource list.
- Consultations on research priorities.

**2) Outreach**

- Outreach to non-immigrant organizations,
- Develop a process for connecting between different languages.

**3) Conference**

- Organize annual multi-stakeholder conference that focuses on immigrant children and youth
- Network/forum for ESL and settlement dialogue
- Develop joint strategic plans amongst key organizations by meeting periodically.

**4) Membership**

- Establish criteria for membership
- Create sub-networks with specific interest and focus (research, policy)
- Analyze our “membership” and figure out where else we might appropriately be soliciting support

**B. Advocacy**

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- Locate real movers and shakers that really model policy
- Lobbying politicians – MPs/MPPs. How? Have a specific committee
- ESL funding – lobby provincial departments of education or federal government departments for transitional programs prior to school entry (welcome centre, assessment, transportation)
- Include the community affected so they can learn/become part of the “grassroots” advocacy for the children of their communities

- What body of the collective provinces other than the Council of Ministers of Education can we get to promote cross-provincial solidarity and group action?
- Conduct institutional analysis of how Canadian institutions (federal/provincial departments, school boards etc.. ) have responded to immigrant children and youth's needs
- Consult with stakeholders to create a national strategy for immigrant children and youth
- Develop and present specific policy papers and recommendations to national, provincial and local institutions
- Use media to make needs/services fir ICY a priority/hot issue
- Lobby for funding for social support e.g. youth groups, welcome centres
- Lobby for national assessment tool and centres
- Strategize on how to change an immigration bureaucracy culture that endures through many changes at the political level

### **C. Communication**

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- Developing the language (also means to listen) to articulate CCICY issues
- Recruiting media outlets that are friendly and support CCICY issues
- Communicate with/through the immigrant population. They can convene "house party" communications
- Newsletter
- Creating forms for dialogue
- Surveying/interviewing former students/newcomers is crucial (also research and translation)
- Have immigrants talk with all levels – down –up
- Take advantage pf media friends we already have (i.e. Atkinson Foundation)
- Enlist the power of fusion music and diverse cultural expression
- Get into youth media
- Who to communicate with? THE WORLD

### **D. Research**

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#### **Encourage quantity and direction of research**

- Encourage more institutional analysis research.
- Influence research funding bodies (i.e. SHRRC) to allocate funds for ICY research.
- Coordinate a national research agenda focusing on ICY

#### **Research on process /programs for anti-hate education**

- Explore and develop programs/modules/processes to address issues of hate across immigrant groups.

- Support sociological/historical research on how diversity-affirming/tolerant societies become polarized and vice versa

**Develop curriculum for teacher education school practice informed by research**

- Influence teacher education programs directly with research findings
- Use research to inform development of curriculum resources (across subjects and disciplines)

**Collect voices – oral histories**

- Involve children’s voices in studies
- Collect oral histories: honouring personal stories; understanding personal challenges

**Longitudinal research**

- Longitudinal research: tracking trends, Canadian context, 1.5 and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation; success factors

**E. Other issues that CCICY could work on:**

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There were a number of other issues identified that were important to the group. The issue of pre-immigration training was of particular priority.

- Better pre-immigration training re: recognition of Canada’s values vis-à-vis: violence, women, children, human rights
- Recognize refugees come from traumatic situations and need psychological first aid (from “adaptation” to “healing”)
- Seek funding to support CCICY priorities
- Preparing for school entry
- Promote CCICY in a concerted way
- Building/strengthening CCICY infrastructure
- Have a clear organizational plan