

Missing Women Commission of Inquiry

Background

In the fall of 2010, a number of organizations working towards improving the lives of women (including the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC) came together to discuss the upcoming inquiry and how violence against women affects all women.

There was agreement that a vital contribution to the inquiry could be made by highlighting many of the systemic inequalities and lack of services for women. And, we believed that our collective voices could make such a contribution. An agreement of understanding was passed and **WESC (Women's Equality and Security Coalition)** was born.

The following organizations form **WESC**:

The National Congress of Black Women Foundation www.nationalcongressofblackwomenfoundation.org

Aboriginal Women's Action Network www.awan.ca

Coalition of Childcare Advocates www.cccabc.bc.ca

Justice for Girls www.justiceforgirls.org

Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centers (CASAC) www.casac.ca

EVE (formerly Exploited Voices now Educating) www.educatingvoices.ca

Vancouver Rape Relief Society www.rapereliefshelter.bc.ca

University Women's Club of Vancouver www.uwcvancouver.ca

The Poverty and Human Rights Coalition

The Asian Women's Coalition Ending Prostitution (see facebook)

Provincial Council of Women www.ncwc.ca/councilsLocal.html

What does child care have to do with the inquiry?

We fight for an affordable, accessible, quality child care system for many reasons. Not only is it good for children, economists have proven it's a good investment for Canada. Working families need child care in order to work. And the research is strong – child care helps reduce poverty.

Women and girls who have experienced abuse, live in poverty, and/or face disabling health issues need services in order to reduce the vulnerability in their lives. Lack of services like affordable (to all) social housing, child care, employment or training opportunities, adequate health care, deplorable rates for social assistance (and others) are barriers which deny women and girls (particularly the most vulnerable) their rights (as described under a variety of United Nations conventions) as Canadians.

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC is proud to be a member of WESC to speak to the inquiry of systemic changes needed to achieve true equality in Canada.

Next steps

Late 2011, WESC submitted our application for participation and funding.

On January 31, 2011, WESC attended and presented to the Hearing for Standing before Judge Oppal, as part of the Missing Women's Commission.

In April 2011, WESC received notification that we had been awarded funding and limited participation status. We are now seeking further clarification to this ruling and will provide updates as they occur.