



News Release

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REPRESENTATIVE LAUNCHES TOUR TO TEACH KIDS ABOUT RIGHTS

VICTORIA – Representative for Children and Youth Bernard Richard today kicked off an 18-month #Rep4Rights outreach tour that will reach into communities across B.C. to educate children and youth about their fundamental rights. The focus of the tour will be on Indigenous children and youth, who are greatly over-represented in the provincial child welfare system.

“We have heard repeatedly from youth and young adults that they didn’t know they had protected rights and that they wish they’d known at a much younger age,” Richard said. “Their experiences became the catalyst for this #Rep4Rights tour. We’re aiming to reach as many children and youth as possible, with a focus on Indigenous children and youth in care.”

The tour launched today at Shoreline Community Middle School in Victoria, and will make stops around the province at schools, Indigenous Friendship Centres, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies and Ministry of Children and Family Development offices. Because many adults are unfamiliar with child rights, RCY staff will also give workshops for adults and caregivers who work with children and youth.

“The old adage that it takes a village to raise a child was never more true than in relation to the protection of child and youth rights,” Richard said. “Upholding the rights of each child requires that all of us understand first what those rights are and then what our own individual roles are in protecting them.”

Led by the Representative’s Advocacy and Indigenous Strategies and Partnerships teams, and working in partnership with Indigenous communities, the tour will educate children and youth ages five to 19 about their protected rights under the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)*, the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)*, and section 70 rights which specify the rights of children and youth in government care under B.C.’s *Child, Family and Community Service Act*.

Canada ratified the *UNCRC* in 1991. B.C. embraced the *UNDRIP* in 2017.

The #Rep4Rights tour will provide workshops at communities around Vancouver Island between now and June 29 for the first leg of the tour. Additional tour stop details are in the planning stages.

Media Contact:
Jeff Rud
Executive Director, Strategy and Communications
250-216-4725
Email: Jeff.Rud@rcybc.ca

Representative for Children and Youth,
British Columbia

