

Education for Development UPDATE

FALL 2008 - Atlantic

Spotlight on GUYANA

Guyana, the only English-speaking country in South America, achieved independence from the United Kingdom in 1966 and became a Republic in 1970. In 1989, Guyana undertook a dramatic reversal from a state-controlled, socialist economy towards a more open, free market system. Guyana is one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere.



How UNICEF works in Guyana...

Children and young people in Guyana face many of the same challenges as children the world over. Poverty and lack of opportunities mean that they often lack confidence in the future. In Guyana it is difficult to monitor progress being made toward improving the lives of children as a result of slow progress in Constitutional and legislative reform and weak data collection. HIV has also had an impact on the lives of children. Despite almost universal access to primary education and near equal access for both boys and girls, there still remain problems related to the quality of education delivered.

UNICEF Guyana's priorities include:

- Development of public policies reflecting the rights of children;
- Protection of children against abuse and violence;
- Improved access to quality health and education services for ALL children;
- Reduction of the threat of HIV among young children and adolescents.

For more information in how UNICEF works in Guyana visit the country website at www.unicef.org/guyana.

"The task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles, but to irrigate deserts."

– C.S. Lewis

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Canadian International Development Agency

For more information about UNICEF Canada's education programmes in the Atlantic Region, please contact Dina Desveaux at Tel: +1 902 422 6000 or ddesveaux@unicef.ca.

UNICEF is the world's leader for children, working in 156 countries and territories to save, protect and enhance the lives of girls and boys. UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, promotes quality basic education, protects children from violence, exploitation and AIDS, and is the world's largest provider of vaccines for developing nations. A global leader in emergencies with six decades of on-the-ground experience, UNICEF saves and rebuilds children's lives in natural disasters and conflict. UNICEF is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations, schools, associations and governments.



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Important Dates

October 5 – World Teacher’s Day

October 5th is World Teacher’s Day, a day set aside by the world community to celebrate teachers and the central role they play in nurturing and guiding infants, children and adults through the life-long learning process. If you can read this, thank a teacher!

October 6 – World Habitat Day

The United Nations has designated the first Monday in October each year as World Habitat Day. The idea is to reflect on the state of our towns and cities and the basic right to adequate shelter for all. It is also intended to remind the world of its collective responsibility for the future of the human habitat.

Cities of the World lesson plans on UN Cyberschoolbus

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/habitat/index.asp>

October 8 – International Day of Natural Disaster Reduction

The second Wednesday of October is the International Day for Disaster Reduction, a vehicle to promote a global culture of natural disaster reduction, including disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness.

Lesson plans have been developed by UNICEF Canada to help teachers explore humanitarian emergencies in their classrooms.

<http://www.unicef.ca/portal/Secure/Community/502/WCM/EDUCATION/lessons/humanitarian/humanitarian.pdf>

October 16 – World Food Day

The right to food is the inherent human right of every woman, man, girl and boy, wherever they live on this planet. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations celebrates World Food Day each year on 16 October, the day on which the Organization was founded in 1945. The World Food Day and TeleFood theme for 2008 is World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy.

Visit the Feeding Minds, Fighting Hunger website to learn about ways you can address the issue of food scarcity in your classroom.

<http://www.feedingminds.org/>

October 17 – International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty has been observed every year since 1993, when the General Assembly, by resolution 47/196, designated this day to promote awareness of the

need to eradicate poverty and destitution in all countries, particularly in developing countries – a need that has become a development priority.

The Poverty Curriculum was developed by the UN Cyberschoolbus.

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/poverty2000/index.asp>

October 24 – United Nations Day

On 24 October 1945, the United Nations was formally established after a majority of its founding members ratified a treaty setting up the world body. In 1971, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution recommending that the day be observed as a public holiday by Member States. Traditionally, United Nations Day has been marked throughout the world by meetings, discussions and exhibits on the goals and achievements of the Organization.

An introduction to the United Nations for students can be found by visiting:

<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/bookstor/kits/english/index.asp>

November 16 – International Day for Tolerance

At the initiative of UNESCO, 1995 was declared the United Nations Year for Tolerance, and it saw the launching of a world-wide campaign for tolerance and non-violence. The International Day for Tolerance grew out of the momentum of that year.

<http://www.tolerance.org/teach/magazine/index.jsp>

November 20 – Universal Children's Day

November 20 is Universal Children's Day—the day the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989.

<http://www.unicef.org/knowyourrights/>

Keep visiting UNICEF Canada’s Advocacy pages to learn more about how Canadians are celebrating Universal Children’s Day.

November 25 – International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

Women activists have marked 25 November as a day against violence since 1981. This date came from the brutal assassination in 1960, of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, on order of Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961).

Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan is a volunteer network founded in 1996 working in solidarity across Canada to support rights and opportunities for Afghan women and girls.

www.w4wafghan.ca

Reflecting on Guyana: If you don't live your dreams, who will?

UNICEF Canada recently led a group of six university students to Guyana on a study trip sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency. The trip offered students – all members of regional UNICEF Campus Clubs at their respective universities – a first hand look at UNICEF's work on the ground, with a special emphasis on innovative youth friendly initiatives in HIV and AIDS prevention. One of the participants has shared his thoughts the experience...

I still daily relive a moment from this study visit that is forever etched into my memory. It was close to the end of our trip, and we were visiting the New Opportunity Corps Correctional Institution, a junior offenders prison for youth in Guyana. Children sentenced of various non-serious crimes were sent here, but instead of being treated as prisoners, each new addition was regarded as a student, and began a series of vocational sessions which included sewing, catering and



plumbing. As we were finishing our walk through of the Carpentry section, something caught my attention: a little girl not older than twelve was holding a copy of *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. This sparked conversation between us about the intensity of the novel, and its somewhat frightful context. She stated that she read because it made her think, and she enjoyed thinking. "Why?" I asked? Because it helped her to imagine how one day she would live out her dream. "And what dream is this?" "Oh," she replied, "to be a school

teacher." I was impressed. And then she looked me square in the eyes and said: "If you don't live out your dreams, who will?"

And that has been the basis on which I have been yearning to live every day since then. If a young girl in prison can have such a pure, almost blissful passion about her dream, what's to stop me; an individual from Canada, with seemingly endless resources, loving parents, and a great network of friends, to live out my dreams?

– Jeremiah Charles
University of Calgary

Listening to Children's Voices:

Canadian Young People and their Rights

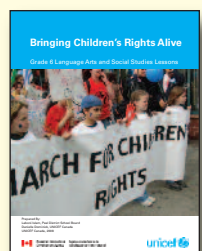
The Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children (CCRC), in collaboration with the Cape Breton University Children's Rights Centre, is asking young people across the country to give their thoughts on children's rights. A survey has been developed which assesses how youth between the ages of 13-17 experience their rights under the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in a variety of settings and whether they are aware they have rights.

The responses from this survey will be used to describe Canadian

youth's knowledge and experiences with their rights in the CCRC's report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva in 2009. It is particularly important that the voices of youth be represented in this report. In the past Canada has been criticized for not paying sufficient attention to the needs and thoughts of its young people. Links to the survey and a flyer with information about the survey can be found at:
<http://www.unicef.ca/portal/SmartDefault.aspx?at=1908> (English)
<http://www.unicef.ca/portal/SmartDefault.aspx?at=1957> (French)

Bringing Children's Rights Alive!

The lessons, developed by staff and volunteers at UNICEF Canada, are consistent with the sixth grade language arts and social studies curricula. Explore issues such as rights vs. wants, income disparities and the food crisis through a range of fun and engaging activities. The lessons are available for download at www.unicef.ca/globaleducation and click on "Classroom Activities."



What's New on unicef.ca

Global TV's Everyday Heroes for the Classroom

Over the past few months, GlobalTV has been airing a regular segment called "Everyday Heroes" profiling the Canadians who don't make the headlines but who make important contributions in the lives of others. In response to numerous requests, the network has put together educational materials for use with the series. Your students learn more about the everyday heroes in their communities and maybe nominate one of your own.

http://www.canada.com/globaltv/national/features/everyday_hero/educators.html

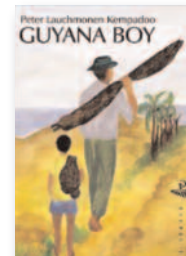
Bookshelves without Borders: From the bookshelf and into your classroom



Under the Moon & Over the Sea: A Collection of Caribbean Poems by John Agard

Grade 3 Up

A collection of more than 50 poems by Guyana's most celebrated poet. Each of the book's five sections begins with a piece of Caribbean folklore and is illustrated by a different contemporary artist – Cathie Felstead, Jane Ray, Christopher Corr, Satoshi Kitamura, and Sara Fanelli. Within each section, vibrant words and evocative artwork bring the sights, sounds, and smells of the islands to life.



Guyana Boy by Peter Lauchmonen Kempadoo

Through the perspective of a child, this novel depicts the extremely hierarchical world of the colonized Guyana sugar plantation. Lilboy, the narrator, describes the liveliness and closeness of community and the restrictions it places on the opportunities of personal freedom of those working there. However, Lilboy describes how his family and friends cope with their seemingly bleak existences through maintaining their own rice plots, fishing, and celebrating with feasts and festivities.

Written as a partial autobiography, this story recreates the sights, smells, sounds, and other sensual pleasures of a rural childhood within the plantation era.



Regional Update – Atlantic

UNICEF child ambassador inspires Atlantic Canadian Youth!



Bilaal Rajan is only 12 years old, yet he's already written one novel, has traveled all over the world and raised more than 50,000 dollars for world aid.

On Friday Oct. 3, Bilaal came to Camp Mockingee, just outside Windsor, Nova Scotia as UNICEF's keynote speaker for the annual youth symposium on global issues called MOVE YOUR WORLD. He was an inspiration to the many youth participants at the symposium as he spoke about how essential fundraising is.

"It sometimes is challenging, but I always know that there are some that will say no, but there will always be others that will say yes."

"Every time I go and make a speech, I have one goal in mind and that is to go and spread the message to kids like me to go out there and make a difference," said Bilaal.

Born and raised in Toronto, Bilaal has been fundraising ever since he was four years old when his parents told him about the suffering of people in Gujarat, India after the earthquake.

"My greatest accomplishment is to get other kids just like myself to help me in my mission. I want kids to realize that anyone can make a difference – not just adults."

– Bilaal Rajan, UNICEF Child Representative

Bilaal is currently working on a project called New Heights for World Education. Bilaal plans to climb Kilimanjaro to raise money for new education programs in Kenya. He is also writing a second novel. Bilaal is a shining example of how youth can Move Their World!!

*Interview by Danielle Singer
UNICEF Education for Development Volunteer*

Volunteer Positions

There are new and creative volunteer positions available in the Atlantic Region. Are you an aspiring actor, journalist, set decorator or youth leader? Give me a call and let's talk!

For more information, please call me in the Halifax area at 422-6000 (ext # 8527) or toll-free at 1-877-876-4233. You can also contact me, that's Dina Desveaux, Education for Development Manager, via e-mail at ddesveaux@unicef.ca

Book a Speaker for the 2008-09 School Year!

UNICEF Atlantic offers free and knowledgeable speakers to K-12 classrooms across the Atlantic Region. Please contact us if you're interested in having a speaker come in to talk about our key topics for the next school year: Girls' Education (focus on Kenya & Afghanistan); Global Diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS and, of course, the topic everyone knows us for: Children's Rights!

Regional Update – Atlantic

Seeing First-hand How Development Works!



Mount Allison University student Nathan Walker being interviewed by UNICEF Radio correspondent Ama Akuamoah.

This past August, UNICEF Canada sent a group of dedicated university students on a trip of a lifetime. The group, consisting of UCAP (UNICEF Campus Ambassador Programme) members from across the country, went to Guyana for a week to observe various programs and facilities affiliated with UNICEF Guyana.

Nathan Walker was one of those students. Nathan considered the trip to be an extreme eye-opener and a way to better understand development.

“It can be challenging to fundraise for UNICEF when you are going on just facts and figures, this trip was a fantastic opportunity to see how UNICEF works on the ground and now I understand the hardships much better.”

The trip, which consisted of visits to various facilities that concentrated on HIV/AIDS and youth development, was both challenging and fascinating for Nathan.



The Canadian trip participants at the Dorothy Bailey Health Centre.



Eager students at an elementary school in Georgetown, Guyana.

“We went to a Guyana school where the program was occurring and we saw the coach actually get through to the kids.”

Nathan said, “It was unbelievable to see programs that were innovative and were really working,” such as the HIV awareness program through sports. The program plays off the relationship between the child and his or her coach to spread information about HIV.

Another favourite moment was the visit to the UNICEF Youth Friendly Health Center. The Center is unique as it strives to make children’s visits to the doctor as comfortable and unthreatening as possible by instituting hang-out centers, game rooms and other facilities within the hospital.

As fascinating as the trip was, it was also a great challenge for Nathan. Between the trip’s jam-packed itinerary and the culture shock, Nathan found the trip not only improved his own world view but charged inner feelings that he has to do more to help.

*Interview by Danielle Singer
UNICEF Education for Development Volunteer*

“I came back from the trip with so many feelings. UNICEF is phenomenal. I have a better understanding of the issues at hand and how important it is for development programs to exist.”

*– Nathan Walker, UCAP President,
Mount Allison University*