

November 16, 2025

Kids Rights Canada Hosts Community Event and Book Launch Ahead of International Children's Day

Markham, ON — Kids Rights Canada, in partnership with Markham Wesley Centre, successfully hosted its community event and official **book launch of *My Rights As a Child*** yesterday. Held ahead of International Children's Day on November 20, the event brought together families, educators, NGO partners, and community leaders to support children's rights education in Canada.

Approximately **30 participants** attended the event.

Featured guests include:

- **Mr. Irwin Elman**, President, Defence for Children International – Canada; Former Ontario Child Advocate
- **Ms. Isa Lee**, Ward 8 Councillor, City of Markham
- **Mr. Ron Lynn**, Chair, York Region District School Board

Throughout the program, community leaders emphasized the growing need to equip children with a clear understanding of their rights—especially amid rising concerns about misinformation and public discourse surrounding rights and freedoms.

Mr. Irwin Elman, President of Defence for Children International in Canada, stressed the urgency of strengthening children's rights literacy. He noted that “*children's rights are important tools that children must learn, especially at this age where the idea of rights is under attack*,” adding that community leaders have a responsibility to ensure young people understand and can exercise their rights.

City of Markham Councillor Isa Lee reflected on the practical value of the newly launched book for families. She shared that, “*while I was reading the book, I found it very meaningful and useful. As a parent, a lot of these ideas are hard to convey, but this book simplifies it.*”

York Region District School Board Trustee Ron Lynn, speaking from an educational perspective, highlighted the role of schools in fostering environments where children feel valued and supported. “*Education is not just about grades*,” he said. “*It is equally important that we teach our children about their rights, and let them know that they are respected and recognized. Every child deserves a learning environment where they feel safe, respected, and listened to.*”

Heidi Chan, Founder of Kids Rights Canada, emphasized that meaningful child participation and early rights education are critical foundations for active citizenship. She explained that empowering children begins with giving them accessible tools, “*Civic participation doesn't begin at adulthood. Children are capable of sharing their voices and taking part in decisions that affect their lives. Yet many still don't learn about their rights in a meaningful way. Our hope is that *My Rights As a Child* becomes a simple, engaging tool for families—something they can read together and talk about, 'a right a night.'*”

About the Book: *My Rights As a Child*

The newly launched book presents the key principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in warm, engaging language for readers aged 6 to 12. Developed with feedback from more than 50 children, families, and child development professionals, the book helps young readers understand child rights concepts of survival, protection, development, and participation.

Its central character—a friendly beaver—was chosen by children during the consultation process, ensuring the book reflects the spirit of meaningful child participation.

About Kids Rights Canada

Kids Rights Canada advocates for and safeguards children's rights through education, community engagement, and participatory initiatives. Guided by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the organization works to empower children as capable, valued members of society whose voices matter in the decisions that affect them.

About the UNCRC

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is an international human rights treaty that establishes the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of children under 18. Canada ratified the UNCRC in 1991, to commit to protecting and promoting these rights for every child. Key aspects include defining a child as any person under 18 and outlining the responsibilities of governments and adults to ensure these rights are protected and promoted.

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