



Fathers Are Capable Too: Parenting Association

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The father emperor penguin forgoes all food for up to 4 months sheltering the egg and nurturing the chick.

NEWS RELEASE: November 16, 2007

National Child's Day Rally in Toronto

November 20, 2007

On Tuesday, November 20, Canada celebrates National Child's Day. National Child's Day celebrates Canada's signing of the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child* on this day in 1991. 2007 represents the 16th anniversary of Canada's confirmation of the agreement, but still the international obligations are widely ignored within this country.

The Convention committed Canada to recognising certain fundamental rights for children and their families. These rights include:

- the provision of the rights and responsibilities of parents and extended family members to provide guidance to their children
- the statement that parents have a joint and primary responsibility for raising their children and that the State should support them in child-raising.
- the conditions that children should not be separated from their parents except in extenuating circumstances, and where such separation must occur, the State must ensure that the child can maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis even if the parents reside in different countries
- the recognition that children have the right to enjoy their own culture and to practise their own religion and language.

The Courts in Canada, and most particularly the Family Law Courts, routinely forget about of these fundamental rights of children, and families, in Canada. This is the very branch of government that is charged with protecting the rights of children and should be accountable to these children and their families. Instead, we see both children and parents subjected to massive amounts of financial, emotional and psychological pressures encouraged by the courts and other government agencies – something that should truly be described as family violence. This violence too often results in serious social problems for children and parents and, much too frequently, death.

To bring further awareness of these problems, FACT will be holding a rally outside of the Ontario Superior Courts at 393 University Avenue in Toronto on Tuesday, November 20, 2007 from 8:30am to approximately 1:00pm. All media and the public are invited to attend and, if they wish, to participate. It is our understanding that other individual and groups will be standing up for our children with us, and at other locations throughout the province and the country.

We believe that the plight of children and families — rich and poor, working or not, but always taxed — and the on-going removal of these children's rights to a family life has become a significant social issue in our society.

It is time that the real stakeholders in marriage and divorce, the parents and children, be recognised rather than treated as sources of quick cash. It is time that a nurturing, not adversarial, future be provided to our children.

F.A.C.T. is a Canadian child-focused group of men and women, children, parents and grandparents – all unpaid volunteers – with its physical presence in the Greater Toronto Area but with membership across the country and beyond. F.A.C.T. promotes equality and our children's rights to *both* parents before and after divorce. It is a telling fact that seeking equality and children's rights in the family courts causes the media to automatically label us to be a "fathers' rights group". Perhaps this is a societal admission of the biases against children's interests and fathers interests are intertwined. This underlying bias should be a major concern to the media and is a prime contributor to many social problems.

For further information, you can call Brian Jenkins, a director of F.A.C.T., at (416)315-5298.