



## ▶▶ THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD: WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF ALL CHILDREN

The Best Interest of the Child (BIC) Conference will bring together academics and professionals from across human services sectors with citizens to explore issues, challenges and initiatives associated with the best interests of the children. Participants in the conference will be engaged by expert keynotes and panel sessions, together with World Café and whole group dialogue sessions, to exchange insights with respect to the improvement of life experiences for children. The conference will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experiences of participants to gain a better understanding of how conceptions and applications of the BIC influence decision-making, promising practices, and policy outcomes for children.

JSGS CONFERENCE  
THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2014  
TCU PLACE  
SASKATOON, SK

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# CONFERENCE AGENDA

**7:30 A.M. REGISTRATION/CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**

**8:15 A.M. WELCOMING REMARKS AND ABORIGINAL SONG**

**Ken Acton**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Social Services, Government of Saskatchewan

**Michael Atkinson**, Executive Director, Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy

**Dion Tootoosis**, Aboriginal Languages and Cultural Coordinator, Indian Teacher Education Program, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan

**8:30 A.M. OPENING KEYNOTE**

**Nicholas Bala**, Professor, Queen's University Faculty of Law

**9:00 A.M. SESSION 1 - OUR VULNERABLE CHILDREN**

Moderated by Heather Heavin, Assistant Professor, College of Law, University of Saskatchewan

Canada's criminal justice system and legislation such as the Youth Criminal Justice Act play an important role in Canada's response to youth crime. However, is it the most effective strategy for reducing levels of youth crime? How well does it reflect the developmental or mental health needs of children and youth? How does it fit within a long-term strategy for producing mature and law-abiding adults? Join us in a thought-provoking panel discussion as we explore answers to some of these questions.

Panelists include:

**Sanjev Anand**, Dean, College of Law, University of Saskatchewan

**Nicholas Bala**, Professor, Faculty of Law, Queen's University

**Ross Green**, Judge, Provincial Court of Saskatchewan

**Brian Rector**, Executive Director, Research and Evidence-based Excellence, Ministry of Justice, Government of Saskatchewan

**10:00 A.M. WELLNESS BREAK**

**10:15 A.M. SESSION 2 - CHILDREN IN CRISIS**

Moderated by Wynne Young, Executive-in-Residence, Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy

How does our society respond to the most vulnerable among us? Public interventions to ensure the safety and security of children are critical. What are the challenges in identifying and responding to children in crisis? How are government and non-government organizations responding to these challenges? Join leading thinkers and innovative practitioners in a discussion about some of the challenges we face and opportunities to consider going forward.

Panelists include:

**Cheryl Milne**, Director, Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights

**Garry Prediger**, Executive Director of Child and Family Services (acting), Services Delivery, Ministry of Social Services, Government of Saskatchewan

**Ailsa Watkinson**, Professor, Faculty of Social Work, University of Regina

**11:15 A.M. WORLD CAFÉ DISCUSSION**

Moderated by Sheryl Mills, Gwenna Moss Centre, University of Saskatchewan

**12:00 P.M. LUNCH**

**12:30 P.M. KEYNOTE PRESENTATION**

**Bob Pringle**, Provincial Child Advocate, Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth

**1:15 P.M. SESSION 3 - CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING**

Moderated by Paul Clarke, Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Regina

How is Saskatchewan improving the health of children through health and non-health interventions? While evidence-based research supports that inactivity, poor nutrition, poverty and income inequality result in poorer health outcomes for children, how are health regions, schools and communities intervening and implementing solutions to these problems? Together, we'll explore what works and areas where improvements need to be made in order to create long-term positive change.

Panelists include:

**Nazeem Muharharine**, Professor, Community Health and Epidemiology, College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan; Director, Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit

**Corey Neudorf**, Chief Medical Health Officer, Saskatoon Health Region

**Cassandra Opikokew**, JSGS PhD Student and Associate Director, Indigenous Peoples' Health Research Centre

**2:15 P.M. SESSION 4 - CHILDREN AS LEARNERS AND LEADERS**

Moderated by Michelle Prytula, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Research, Programs and Partnerships and incoming Dean, College of Education, University of Saskatchewan

Education and learning systems play a critical role in helping children and youth develop into mature and productive adults. While Saskatchewan has shown leadership in treaty education and anti-bullying initiatives, how do we ensure that these interventions are successful? What should be the priorities for education systems in the future? What do stakeholders have to say about these matters? Help nurture positive discussion on new ways to approach the education of our children.

Panelists include:

**Dan Florizone**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Government of Saskatchewan

**Patricia Prowse**, Student First Advisor, Ministry of Education, Government of Saskatchewan

**Delbert Wapass**, Chief, Thunderchild First Nations

**3:15 P.M. WELLNESS BREAK**

**3:30 P.M. WORLD CAFÉ DISCUSSION**

Moderated by Sheryl Mills, Gwenna Moss Centre, University of Saskatchewan

**4:15 P.M. KEYNOTE PRESENTATION**

**David Arnot**, Q.C., Judge and Chief Commissioner, Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission