

Child Welfare-No More Shortcuts!

Every May the Director of Children's Advocate in Saskatchewan gives a report card on the welfare of children in our province to the legislative assembly and every year we hear about the report and the systemic problems that exist. Yet, our family experienced two needless deaths of loved ones in their care and under their watch.

This ministry's shortfalls was pointed out by Tim Korol and others and the Minister of Social Services, most of them with no background in the humanities give 'canned speeches' to the media and carry on as usual-for the most part.

When it comes to concerns for children in foster care or too many deaths, the government promises to do better. In some areas they likely have but significantly because it is a huge systemic problem and it does not

Soon the reports are forgotten by the public and so are the babies and children who remain 'at risk' and too many die.

We must not forget them and lobby for them and if they will not 'clean-up' the system and do due diligence in their professional roles as was the case here, we need to seek justice for them.

The justice system will send other perpetrators of crimes against infants and children to jail and for rehabilitation but allow public servants to 'get away with breaches of duty and due diligence that contribute to the state of our children's welfare.

We pay taxes and these public servants have a fiduciary duty to us who pay their wages. Even the judges have the same duties. Although appointed by the government it is we the people that vote for them and put them there.

Below is a sampling of some of the reports over the past several years that validate my claims.

NEWS RELEASE - MAY 1, 1996

CHILDREN'S ADVOCATE ANNUAL REPORT TABLED –Dr. Parker-Loewen

"In this, her first report, Parker-Loewen urges all citizens of Saskatchewan to be strong advocates for children. She states:

"Parents, professionals that work with children, volunteer organizations, religious organizations, politicians and children's advocates are a few of the adult groups that serve to draw attention to the issues that children face on a daily basis. Children need us to support them."

Parker-Loewen says that ensuring children's rights is a responsibility we all share as citizens. This belief echoes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which emphasizes the need to protect children's rights in order to ensure that children grow up "...in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality...."

Parker-Loewen said: "Only by our concerted and collective effort will we realize significant and lasting change that ensures respect for the interests and well-being of our children."



CHILDREN'S ADVOCATE ANNUAL REPORT TABLED - Government of Saskatchewan.url

[CBC News](#) Last Updated: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 | 4:58 PM CT



Foster care in Saskatchewan in 'crisis' Children's Advocate - Saskatchewan - CBC News.url



PUTTING CHILDREN FIRST PROVINCE TAKES ACTION ON CHILD WELFARE - Government of Saskatchewan.url



CHILDREN'S ADVOCATE ANNUAL REPORT TABLED - Government of Saskatchewan.url



Mother of child who died in foster care suing province

[CBC News](#)

Posted: Jan 16, 2013 10:55 AM CST

Last Updated: Jan 16, 2013 10:54 AM CST

Video Content

Lawsuit alleges failures in foster care2:20

[Lawsuit alleges failures in foster care2:20](#)

The statement of claim alleges that the children were abused and the death of June Goforth was entirely preventable.

Infant Mortality

Key Messages

- **Canada gets a "C" and ranks second-to-last among 17 peer countries.** Its infant mortality rate is shockingly high for a country at Canada's level of socio-economic development.
- Although Canada has dramatically reduced its infant mortality rate over the past few decades, other countries have done better.
- Infant mortality is a sentinel indicator of child health and the well-being of a society over time.

Putting infant mortality in context

"The infant mortality rate—the rate at which babies of less than one year of age die—reflects economic and social conditions for the health of mothers and newborns, as well as the effectiveness of health systems," states the *OECD Factbook 2009*.¹ Many health experts see the infant mortality rate as a sentinel indicator of child health and the well-being of a society over time. It also indicates health disparities between different populations, both within and between countries.

The causes of infant mortality are “strongly correlated to those structural factors, like economic development, general living conditions, social wellbeing, and the quality of the environment, that affect the health of entire populations,” according to a 2003 article in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.² The 2005 United Nations’ *Human Development Report* states: “No indicator captures the divergence in human development opportunity more powerfully than child mortality.”³ And the Canadian Institute for Health Information notes that infant mortality rates are “a long-established measure, not only of child health, but also of the well-being of a society.”⁴

How does Canada compare internationally on infant mortality?

In 2007, Canada’s infant mortality rate—or the number of deaths of children less than one year of age per 1,000 live births—was 5.1.⁵ This was significantly higher than the rate in almost all its peer countries. Canada earns a “C” on this indicator. The only comparator country with a worse record on infant mortality is the U.S., with 6.5 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

REPORT CARD					
Infant Mortality					
	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s
Australia	A	B	C	C	B
Austria	C	D	D	B	B
Belgium	B	C	D	C	B
Canada	B	B	B	C	C
Denmark	A	A	B	B	B
Finland	A	A	A	A	A
France	B	B	B	B	B
Germany	C	C	C	B	B
Ireland	C	C	C	C	B
Italy	D	D	D	C	B
Japan	B	A	A	A	A
Netherlands	A	A	B	B	B
Norway	A	A	B	A	A
Sweden	A	A	A	A	A
Switzerland	A	A	B	B	B
U.K.	B	B	C	C	C
U.S.	B	C	D	D	D

Source: The Conference Board of Canada.

No. Even though Canada’s rate of infant mortality is lower now than it was in previous decades, Canada’s **relative** ranking has fallen. Other countries have seen much more substantial reductions in their infant mortality rates.

Canada’s relative grade on infant mortality dropped from a “B” in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s to a “C” in the 1990s and 2000s.

Finland and Sweden maintained “A” grades over all five decades. Italy has seen the most marked improvement, rising from a “D” in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s to a “B” in the 2000s.

Why is Canada’s infant mortality rate higher than those of most peer countries?

© Copyright 2013 The Conference Board of Canada - [Terms of use](#) | [Privacy policy](#) | [Site map](#)

No more complacency should be tolerated within our Child Welfare system. Also we need to demand more of our justice system in protecting the rights of vulnerable children.

No More Shortcuts and Excuses!