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by:

Alberta **LAW**
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YOUTH LEGAL RIGHTS HANDBOOK



 ActionDignity



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DISCLAIMER

This resource does not contain legal advice.

This resource was prepared with the assistance of Pro Bono Students Canada - University of Calgary law student volunteers. PBSC volunteers are not lawyers, and they are not authorized to provide legal advice.

This resource contains general discussion of certain legal and related issues only. If you require legal advice, please consult with a lawyer.

ActionDignity Society expresses heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to these students and their supervisors for their expertise and support on this project!



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is with gratitude and critical awareness that Action Dignity acknowledges where we organize, work, live and build community is Treaty 7 territory, which is the homeland of the Blackfoot Confederacy: the Siksika, Kainai and Piikani; their Treaty 7 cosignatories: the Tsuut'ina and Stony Nakoda Nations consisting of Chiniki, Bearspaw and Good Stoney Bands; the Métis Nation of Alberta Districts 5 & 6 and all those who call Mohkinstsis (MOH-kin-stiss) home.

At Action Dignity we are committed to staying informed and alert to situations of oppression in Canada and abroad, as well as taking on the personal and collective responsibility of working and living with a commitment to decolonization while creating pathways towards action regarding the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's 94 Calls to Action (2015) and the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Reclaiming Power and Place (2019).

This includes recognizing the impacts of colonialism and imperialism both historically and presently. It is our work as individuals and as a global community to use our voices and actions to advocate for the fundamental human rights of Indigenous peoples everywhere and engage in work that is grounded in social justice, anti-racist and anti-oppressive values.

We recognize the enduring presence, resilience, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples on this land and also the ways Indigenous peoples continue to be oppressed and marginalized on Turtle Island because of the enduring effects of ongoing colonialism and imperialism. We are committed to working towards equity, justice, reconciliation, and systems change that leads to a just and equitable future for all.



SECTION 1: RIGHTS AT SCHOOL

Overview of Student Rights at School

Every student in Calgary has rights at school. The law in Alberta says what these rights are, and how they need to be respected. This Chapter will tell you about your rights at school, and what you can do to stand up for them. You can find the full legal documents setting out what your rights are on the Calgary Board of Education website at: <https://cbe.ab.ca/about-us/policies-and-regulations/Pages/default.aspx>.

Right to Access Education

Everyone in Alberta between the ages of 6 and 19 has the right to access education, even if there is an ongoing emergency such as the COVID pandemic, a snowstorm, or a flood. Your education has to be provided in English but can be provided in French if your parents are native Francophones. Your school has to give you an education that teaches you mathematics, reading and writing skills. Your education must also help you to become a happy and productive citizen and be meaningful to you.

Attendance Rights

You are supposed to attend school everyday, but you have a right to miss school if you are sick, celebrating a religious holiday, or in special circumstances that you can't control. If you regularly miss school, then your school has to address the problem with early support that considers your individual needs, experiences and abilities.

Right to a Diverse Education

Your school must give you an education that is diverse and builds understanding and respect for the different groups of people living in Alberta. You have a right to see yourself, your family and your community in the education you receive. To do this, your school must provide opportunities for you to learn about and engage in activities that promote reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, and teach you about racial, cultural, gender, and sexual diversity.

Right to a Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe School Environment

You have the right to a school environment where you feel like you belong, are cared for, and understand clearly what is expected of you. You should feel included and respected by other students, your teachers, and principal at school regardless of your ability, disability, language, culture, sexual orientation, gender, and age. You can create a student organization at school to help you and other students feel more welcome, cared for, respected, and safe. If you choose to do this, you have the right to the support of your principal and teachers.

Right to Receive Support at School

Your education has to meet your needs and help you to be successful at school. If you are struggling at school, you have the right to receive additional support that is specific to you. In Calgary, you can access additional support at school to learn English, and address learning difficulties or emotional, social and behavioural challenges. To learn more about the specific supports and how to access them you can visit the Calgary Board of Education website at: <https://cbe.ab.ca/programs/supports-for-students/Pages/default.aspx>

Right to Safe and Reliable Transportation to and from School

The Calgary Board of Education has to make sure that you have a safe, reliable way to get to and from school everyday. Students in high school may need to use Calgary Transit but still have the right to a positive experience getting to and from school. If you have a safety concern or require help with transportation you can call Calgary 7 Transit at 403-262-1000 or text 74100.

Right to Not be Bullied

As part of feeling welcome, cared for, respected and safe at school, you have the right to not be bullied. This right covers freedom from bullying that occurs at school or online during and outside of school time. In Calgary, the school board works with the Calgary Police Service, United Way, mental health agencies, Alberta Education, Alberta Health Services and many youth organizations to address bullying at school.

Your school has to provide you with support if you are impacted by bullying, but you can access additional support by calling the 24/7 bullying helpline at 1-888-456-2323 or the mental health helpline at 1-877-303-2642. Students who participate in bullying also have the right to access support in resolving the behaviour. If you witness bullying, you should report it to your classroom teacher, an advisor, guidance counsellor, or any other school staff member that you feel comfortable with.



Student Responsibilities

In exchange for the rights above, Alberta and the Calgary Board of Education expect you to attend school regularly, be willing to learn, report bullying, respect the rights of other students, and not disrupt the learning of other students. If you disrupt or interrupt class or board meetings, trespass on school property or behave in a way that is unsafe at school you may be charged with an offence and fined up to \$1,000. You have the right to be aware of these expectations and the potential for discipline through access to the Calgary Board of Education Student Code of Conduct which can be found on the school board website at: <https://cbe.ab.ca/about-us/policies-and-regulations/Pages/Administrative-Regulations.aspx>.

Independent Students

Independent students have the right to make decisions about their own education, including choosing the kind of education they receive. You can become an independent student if you are over the age of 18 or are over the age of 16 living independently from your parents, responsible for your own finances, or are trusted with making important life decisions. You may wish to become an independent student if you want the school to communicate with you about your education and conduct at school instead of your parents. If you wish to become an independent student, you must submit a written request to your school principal.

Suspension & Expulsion

If you misbehave at school, the punishment can be serious, including suspension and expulsion. Suspension is when a teacher or the principal removes you from school for a class period or from attending school for up to 10 school days. Expulsion is when the principal removes you from attending school for longer than 10 school days.

Before you are suspended or expelled, the school has to discuss the consequences of your behaviour with you, discuss the reasonableness of the suspension or expulsion with you and provide written documentation of the suspension or expulsion. If you are suspended, the principal will have to notify your parents, prepare a report outlining the reasons for your suspension, and provide an opportunity to meet with your parents. Before you can be expelled, the principal must first suspend you from school and recommend an expulsion to the Calgary Board of Education.

If you disagree with your suspension or expulsion, you can appeal the decision to the Calgary Board of Education or request the Minister of Childcare and Education to review your suspension or expulsion.

Concerns & Complaints

If you have a concern or complaint about the conduct of a teacher or the principal at your school, or anything unrelated to suspension and expulsion, you can follow the process below to have this addressed. You have the right to have your concern or complaint attended to respectfully and handled confidentially.

1. You should raise the concern or complaint with the individual teacher, principal or other staff member at your school who must make every effort possible to meet with you to discuss your concern or complaint.
2. If your concern or complaint is not resolved, then you can direct it to the principal at your school.
3. If the matter is not resolved at the school level, you have the right to direct your concern or complaint in writing to the Calgary Board of Education Director by filling out the Complaint Form on the Calgary Board of Education website at: <https://cbe.ab.ca/about-us/contact-us/Pages/concerns.aspx>.
4. If the matter remains unresolved, you can make a written request for the Superintendent to review your concern or complaint.

For additional information about the Calgary Board of Education concern and complaint process, visit the Calgary Board of Education website at: <https://cbe.ab.ca/about-us/contact-us/Pages/concerns.aspx>.



Appeals

If you are over the age of 16, you can appeal a decision that impacts your ability to participate at school, impacts your ability to complete school, denies you access to additional support at school, suspends you for more than 5 school days, or expels you. If you are under the age of 16, your parents can appeal a decision for you. You may want to appeal decisions that you think were influenced by bias, unsupported by evidence, or are unreasonable.

You can start an appeal by filling out the Calgary Board of Education Notice of Appeal document found on the Calgary Board of Education website at: <https://cbe.ab.ca/registration/forms-you-need/Pages/default.aspx>. The appeal form must be submitted to the Calgary Board of Education within 20 school days from the date of the decision you are appealing.

After you appeal, the Calgary Board of Education will prepare a written report that you have the right to respond to. Your appeal will be handled by the Superintendent who may set up a hearing for the appeal. You have the right to receive written documentation of the Superintendent's decision and the reasons for that decision within 20 school days. Once a final decision is made, you may be able to request a review of the decision from the Minister of Childcare and Education. For more information on the appeal process visit the Calgary Board of Education website at: <https://cbe.ab.ca/about-us/policies-and-regulations/Pages/Administrative-Regulations.aspx>.



References

Education Act, SA 2012, c E-0.3

Alberta Ministerial Order #028/2020

Calgary Board of Education Administrative Regulations:

- AR 6000 – Independent Students
- AR 5007 – Concerns & Complaints
- AR 5008 – Appeals
- AR 6005 – Student Code of Conduct
- AR 6007 – Suspension & Expulsion
- AR 6020 – Attendance of Students
- AR 6031 – Welcoming, Caring, Respectful and Safe Learning and Work Environments

Calgary Board of Education Website Pages:

- Support for Students
- Busing & Transportation – Calgary Transit
- Contact Us – Concerns & Complaints



SECTION 2: RIGHTS AT WORK

Looking for work?

You must be over 12 to work a non-artistic job (acting, singing), 13-14 year olds can only work specific jobs, like delivery of papers, food service, coach and tutor and 15-17 year olds can work most jobs, but cannot work in retail or hospitality from the hours of midnight to 6am.

You cannot be required to attach a photo of yourself when submitting a resume.

Interviewers may ask a variety of questions during interviews but cannot ask anything that you could be discriminated against for. You cannot be asked about your race, gender, religion, age, marital status, or plans for having children during an interview. If an employer asks you an inappropriate question, you can say that the question crosses protected ground and that you do not have to answer.

If you believe an interviewer has discriminated against you based on race, gender, religion, age, marital status, or plans for having children, you can make a complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission. You can make the complaint within one year of the incident by calling 780-427-7661 or at <https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/complaints/am-i-in-the-right-place/self-assessment/>.

Getting a Job

You are owed minimum wage at least. In Alberta, the minimum wage is \$13 per hour for students under 18, and \$15 per hour for most adult employees. Your employer must pay you at least once a month. These wages do not include tips or expenses.

You are given one 30-minute break per 5 hours of work. This may be paid or unpaid, but if any restrictions are placed on you during break, it must be paid.

You must be paid for at least 3 hours of minimum wage work each day that you show up (if you only work for 2 hours, you are still entitled to 3 hours of pay at the minimum wage). This applies unless you are ages 13-15, and working during school hours, where you instead are entitled to 2 hours of minimum wage (if you only work 1 hour, you are entitled to 2 hours of pay at the minimum wage).

The maximum you can be asked to work in a day is 8 hours, and the maximum you can be asked to work in a week is 44 hours. You can only go over this if you choose to sign an overtime agreement with your boss. If you work overtime, your boss has to pay you overtime pay. Overtime pay is 1.5x your normal wage.

You cannot be asked to work over 12 hours in a day (unless there is an accident, urgent work for a plant or machinery, or unforeseeable circumstances arise).

Employees who are 15 cannot work during school hours unless enrolled in an off-campus education program, like a work experience class through your high school.

You get 2 weeks of vacation pay per year, or vacation pay paid out on each paycheque according to the Government of Alberta calculation (4% of your total pay). You will either receive this pay on each paycheque or will be able to use the time as it is earned throughout the year.

Getting a Job Continued...

You are allowed 16 weeks of maternity leave, provided you give your employer at least 6 weeks of notice. You (and your partner) are entitled to 62 weeks of parental leave combined. You cannot be fired during this time. You must give your employer 4 weeks notice before you return to work.

If you've worked at your job for 90 days, employers are required to give you personal time off if you request it (up to 5 days in a year). You can't be fired for taking this leave.

Employers must provide equal pay for employees of different genders doing the same or very similar work. However, employers may pay people more based on experience, merit, or education. If someone at your job has worked there longer than you, has additional qualifications, or has higher education than you, they can be paid more for the same work.

Employers must make an effort to accommodate you for your personal needs, as long as they are reasonable. As long as your needs can be reasonably met, your boss must attempt to accommodate them. If you need space or time to pray, or time off to engage in cultural practice, your employer must attempt to help you fulfill these needs.

If you feel you've been discriminated against based on your race, gender, religion, age, marital status, or plans for having children at work, you can make a complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission. You can make the complaint within one year of the incident by calling the Alberta Human Rights Commission at 780-427-7661.

Safety at Work

Right to know: Employees have the right to know about any and every workplace hazard. Your supervisor must tell you about anything at work that could be dangerous, and how to stay safe when dealing with dangers. If you ask your supervisor a question about a hazard, they must answer it.

Right to refuse unsafe work: Employees have the right to refuse any task they think is unsafe. You cannot be fired or punished in any way for refusing potentially unsafe work. However, you must tell a supervisor why you are refusing the work.

Right to participate: You have the right to voice concerns about safety to your employer. If you are worried about a specific hazard, you should talk to your supervisor or manager about how to deal with it.

If something at your job is unsafe, and you have mentioned it to your supervisor and it continues, you may contact Alberta Occupational Health and Safety about your concern, without fear of losing your job or facing consequences. They can be reached at 1-866-415-8690 or at <https://www.alberta.ca/file-complaint-online>.

If you are injured or are sick at work, you may be entitled to workers compensation. The Workers Compensation Board can help get you back to health and offers benefits in the form of pay and costs. You can contact them at 1-866-922-9221 or at <https://www.wcb.ab.ca/>.

If you lose your job, at no fault of your own, you may be entitled to Employment Insurance (EI). To receive EI, you must be actively looking for work, but be unable to find a job. You may also be entitled to EI during maternity/parental leave. Eligibility for EI is set out at <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei.html>.

Leaving a Job

Employees must get one week of notice before being fired, or one week's pay, unless you are a seasonal worker, or have not worked at your job for 90 days. Likewise, you must give your employer one week's notice before quitting. If fired, you must receive your last paycheque within 31 days of your last day.

If fired, you are entitled to any outstanding vacation pay that has not been paid out.



References

Employment Standards Code, RSA 2000, c E-9

Employment Standards Regulation, Alta Reg 14/1997

Alberta Human Rights Act, RSA 2000, c A-25.5

Occupational Health and Safety Act, SA 2020, c O-2.2

<https://albertahumanrights.ab.ca/issues-at-work/rights-and-responsibilities/>

<https://www.alberta.ca/employment-standards>

https://www.cplea.ca/wp-content/uploads/EMPL_Worker101.pdf



SECTION 3: RIGHTS WITH POLICE

Important Terms

Detained – Temporarily held by police. You must stay.

Arrested – Taken into custody based on suspected offence.

Statement – What you tell the police. This may be used in court.

Voluntary – Freely chosen, not pressured, scared, or confused.

Extrajudicial Sanctions (EJS) / Extrajudicial Measures (EJM) – Programs that help you avoid a court conviction.

Responsible Person – Adult approved by the court to supervise your release.

Interpreter – Someone who helps you understand if English isn't your main language.

1) If police stop you:

(on the street, at school, on transit, or during a traffic stop)

Are you free to go, detained, or arrested?

Free to go: You're not required to stay and may leave if you wish.

Detained: Police are investigating. You must stay but can remain silent or ask to speak to a lawyer.

Arrested: Police believe you committed a crime. You must go with them and have rights under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Showing ID

Walking: Usually you are not required to show ID unless you are detained, or being ticketed. If the police tell you that you are not free to go and ask you to identify yourself, you must correctly identify yourself.

Driver: You must show your license, registration, and insurance.

Passenger: Usually you are not required to show ID unless the police have a legal reason. If you are asked to identify yourself, it may be in your best interest to identify yourself correctly to avoid charges.

Searches

(you, your bag, your phone)

- You can say: "I do not consent to a search."
- If you are Detained: Police can do a pat-down for safety.
- If you are Arrested: Police can search your body and items you're carrying.
- For your Phone: Police usually need a warrant to go through your phone. You do not need to give them your password.

1) If police stop you:

Tips to Stay Safe

- Speak clearly and respectfully.
- Keep your hands where they can be seen.
- You can record from a distance if you're not interfering.
- Write down what happened: time, place, badge numbers, witnesses and contact information.

"Quick Rights" to Remember

- Getting stopped by the police can be intimidating. Stay calm. Keep your hands visible.
- You may ask: "Am I free to go?"
- If yes → walk away calmly.
- If no → you're being detained. You must identify yourself with your full name and birthdate.
- You have the right to stay silent and ask for a lawyer.
- You don't have to answer where you're going or what you're doing.
- Don't resist. Say: "I want to speak to a lawyer or a guardian."
- If your English is not proficient you may ask for an interpreter.



2) If you're arrested or charged:

What to do right away

- Say: "I want a lawyer."
- Do not talk to the police about the incident or anything related to it.
- Stay completely silent until you speak to a lawyer. Do what your lawyer says.

Remember: Anything you say can be used against you.

- Ask the police to call a parent, guardian, or responsible adult.
- Do not say anything else about what happened.
- Do not sign anything unless it is a release document.

If the police ask you to sign a paper, ask: "Is this my release document?"

- **If the answer is "No," do not sign it.**

What might happen next

Police may:

- Decide not to charge you and let you go.
- Charge you and let you go right away with a court date, or
- Take you to the police station.

When you get to the police station, they will let you talk to a lawyer.

You should always talk to a lawyer, and you should not say anything to the police until after you talk to a lawyer.

2) If you're arrested or charged:

Statements to Police

Saying anything out loud in person, over the phone or written on paper, over email, or text to the police may be considered a statement. A statement is a legal document police can use in court.

A statement you give can only be used in court if:

- You were told your rights in a way you understand
- You had a trusted adult with you (unless you said no in writing)
- You spoke voluntarily: not because you were scared, confused, or pressured
- Never give a statement to the police unless a lawyer is sitting beside you.
- Never agree to talk to the police without a lawyer.

You can say:

“I want to talk to a lawyer before saying anything.”

“I don't understand. Please, can you explain it again?”

“I don't want to give a statement.”

Your Legal Rights as a Youth

- To know why you're being arrested – Charter s. 10(a)
- To talk to a lawyer – Charter s. 10(b); YCJA s. 25
- To have a parent or other adult contacted – YCJA s. 25(2)
- To stay silent – Charter s. 7; YCJA s. 146
- To use an interpreter – Charter s. 14

2) If You Are Arrested or Charged:

Court and Release (Bail)

After the Police Decide What Happens :

If the police take you to the station, they will usually let you go with a court date.

Sometimes, they might make you wait to see a Judge. The Judge will decide if you can go home or if there are conditions you must follow.

The law says jail must be a last resort for youth.

Before keeping you in custody, the court must consider all other options.

Youth are almost always released unless there is a very serious reason not to.

Your Court Date

Once you are allowed to go home, you will receive your next court date.

You must go to court on that date.

Duty Counsel, a free lawyer from Legal Aid will be at court to help you for your first court date.

Everyone under 18 can get a free lawyer through Legal Aid to help with their case.

- The Crown must prove there's no safe release plan before you can be held.
- You may be released to a responsible person (a parent, guardian, or approved adult).



3) Diversion: Avoiding Charges in Court

The law says police and prosecutors must consider other options before charging youth, especially for non-violent offenses.

Extrajudicial Measures (EJM)

Used before charges are laid. Examples include:

- Verbal or written warning
- Referral to counseling
- Community service or apology

Extrajudicial Sanctions (EJS)

Used after charges are laid if you accept responsibility. If you complete the program, charges are withdrawn.

You may be eligible for EJS unless the offense involves:

- Violence causing harm
- Break and enter (of a dwelling)
- Driving offenses
- Perjury

Youth Records

- Youth records are private, but not invisible
- Only certain people can access them, and only for a limited time
- If you commit more offenses or break conditions, your record might be reopened



4) Short Scenarios:

A – Street Stop

Sam (16) is asked, “Where are you going?” Sam says: “Am I free to go?” The officer says “Yes.” Sam walks away calmly.

- ✓ You can ask if you’re free to go. Do so calmly.

B – Detention

Avery (15) is told to stay put. Police ask to see her ID. She doesn’t have any ID, but she gives them her full name and date of birth.

Avery also says: “I want a lawyer.” She stays completely silent and does not answer any other questions. Later, she is released.

- ✓ During detention, you must stay, but don’t have to talk.

C – Arrest

Jay (17) is arrested. Jay says: “I want a lawyer and a parent with me.” Jay doesn’t answer questions.

- ✓ Don’t give a statement until you’ve spoken to a lawyer.

D – Phone Search

Mika (16) is asked to unlock their phone. Mika says: “I don’t consent.”

- ✓ You don’t have to unlock it. Police usually need a warrant.



5) Where to Get Help:

Duty Counsel – A free lawyer in court

Ask for Duty Counsel at the Calgary Courts Centre on your first court date. You may also be able to get phone advice before court through Legal Aid Alberta.

Contacting Legal Aid Alberta

- Apply for or ask about Duty Counsel by phone Monday–Friday, 8:15 a.m.–4:15 p.m.
- Phone: 1-866-845-3425
- Website: legalaid.ab.ca

Youth Programs / Clinics (Pro Bono/Free & Community Services)

- Student Legal Assistance (University of Calgary) – Free/pro bono student-run legal clinic (criminal, civil, some family matters; income-qualified)
- Telephone: 403-220-6637
- Website: slacalgary.com
- Calgary Legal Guidance (CLG) – Free legal guidance and clinics; can point to youth/court resources.
- Telephone: 403-234-9266
- Website: clg.ab.ca
- Pro Bono Law Alberta (PBLA) – Coordinates pro bono programs (e.g., civil duty counsel); information & referrals (not a walk-in clinic).
- Telephone: 403-541-4804
- Website: pbla.ca
- Calgary Youth Justice Society (CYJS) – Youth diversion & supports (including Youth Justice Committees).
- Telephone: 403-261-9861

5) Where to Get Help:

Continued...

- Website: elizabethfrycalgary.ca
- Website: calgaryyouthjustice.ca
- Calgary John Howard Society (CJHS) – Youth outreach, advocacy & crime-prevention supports.
- Telephone: 403-266-4566
- Website: cjhs.ca
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Calgary (EFry) – Court support & basic legal information (women/gender-diverse; adult & youth court).
- Telephone: 403-294-0737



References

- Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA):
 - s. 3 – Purpose: rehabilitation, fairness, least jail time
 - s. 6–10 – Diversion before or after charges
 - s. 25 – Right to lawyer and supportive adult
 - s. 29 – Detention only when necessary
 - s. 31 – Release to a responsible person
 - s. 38–39 – Sentencing and custody as last resort
 - s. 146 – Rules for youth statements
- Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Charter):
 - s. 7 – Right to life, liberty, and security
 - s. 8 – Protection from unreasonable search
 - s. 9 – No arbitrary detention
 - s. 10 – Rights during arrest or detention
 - s. 14 – Right to an interpreter
- Tustin, Lee, A Guide to the Youth Criminal Justice Act, 2025/2026 ed (LexisNexis Canada, 2025).

Y-JUSTICE PROJECT INFO

The Y-Justice Project is a youth-driven initiative by ActionDignity that empowers racialized youth (ages 15–26) to understand their rights, advocate for themselves, and influence meaningful policy change. Rooted in equity, inclusion, and community leadership, this project seeks to ensure that all young people, especially those from equity-deserving groups, feel safe, supported, and heard in schools, workplaces, and public spaces.

Background

The project builds on a 2020 commitment by Calgary Police Service (CPS) Chief Mark Neufeld and City Council to address systemic racism and reimagine the role of police in schools. An external review of the School Resource Officer (SRO) Program was launched, followed by additional student and community engagements in 2021–2023. ActionDignity's role in this process focused on amplifying the voices and experiences of junior and senior high school students, particularly those from racialized and immigrant communities.

Purpose

Y-Justice responds directly to the justice and legal challenges racialized youth often face. By combining community engagement, legal education, and systems leadership training, the project equips youth to:

- Understand and exercise their legal rights.
- Build confidence in navigating justice systems.
- Develop skills to analyze and address systemic barriers.
- Engage decision-makers to advocate for policy change.

Y-JUSTICE PROJECT INFO

Key Project Activities

- Conversation Circles
- Legal Education Workshops
- Systems Leadership Training
- Community Action Plan (CAP)
- Natural Support Training
- Policy Engagement & Advocacy Partnerships

The project collaborates with ethnocultural community organizations (ECCs), Calgary Board of Education, Calgary Catholic School District, CPS, immigrant-serving agencies, legal service providers, non-profit organizations, and decision-makers. These collaborations ensure youth voices are at the center of building safer, more equitable communities.

Objectives

1. Educate racialized youth about their rights through workshops, training, and translated resources.
2. Empower youth to become systems leaders, capable of influencing policies and practices that directly impact their lives.

Vision

Through youth leadership, education, and advocacy, Y-Justice is building a future where racialized youth in Calgary are not only informed and supported but also positioned as key changemakers in creating inclusive and equitable communities.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

School – Work – Police

For Youth in Calgary & Alberta



At School

- Every student has rights at school.
- You have the right to attend school from ages 6–19.
- You have the right to a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment.
- You have the right to not be bullied, at school or online.
- You can create student clubs/groups (cultural, GSA, identity-based) and your school must support you.
- You have the right to extra support if you're struggling (learning, mental health, behaviour, English language).



At Work

- You must be 12+ to work (non-artistic jobs).
- Ages 13–14 can only work certain jobs.
- Ages 15–17 can work most jobs but not in hospitality or retail from midnight–6am.
- Interviewers cannot ask anything that you could be discriminated against for (race, gender, religion, age, marital status).
- You must be paid at least minimum wage.
- You must receive breaks, vacation pay, and safe working conditions.
- Your boss must make fair efforts to accommodate your needs (religion, disability, culture).



With the Police

- If the police stop you: You can ask: “Am I free to go?” If yes, walk away calmly.
- If no, you are being detained – stay calm and quiet.
- You have the right to know why you're being arrested.
- You have the right to stay silent and ask for a lawyer.
- You do not have to unlock your phone or give your password.
- You can ask for an interpreter if needed.
- If you are under 18 you can get a free lawyer through Legal Aid to help with their case



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