



November 2020

(The electronic version is available for download under Social Justice Publications at [bctf.ca](http://bctf.ca).)

While official numbers on poverty in 2020 will not be available until 2022, it is not difficult to imagine the economic impact COVID-19 has created for many Canadians, and disproportionately more problems for those with much less. Many found themselves with fewer work opportunities or were simply laid off. This resulted in the rise of unmet health needs, food insecurity, and unmet housing needs to name a few. Additionally, students of such families faced the academic disadvantages of school closures, as well as the increased stress and strain of self-isolation and social distancing.

These adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are potentially stressful, traumatic events that can have negative, lasting effects on health and general well-being. Studies have shown that the more adversities someone experiences, the higher the likelihood they will have serious mental and physical health problems later in life. While poverty is not a category on the ACE questionnaire, it is easy to see how poverty (with the effects of COVID-19 acting as a multiplier) could accelerate the risk and push towards the nine adverse experiences listed.

According to the World Bank, the pandemic could push as many as 115 million people into poverty worldwide. In his address in April of this year, UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated that “the world cannot afford a lost generation of youth, their lives set back by COVID-19 and their voices stifled by a lack of participation.” The risk of inaction is simply too great.

- Marcus Tse, Economic Justice Action Group

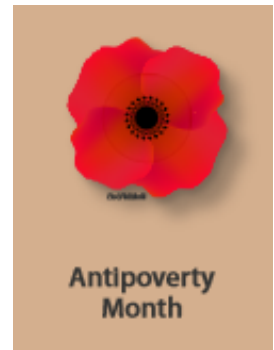
The BCTF has named November [Antipoverty Month](#). As teachers, we know firsthand the effects of poverty on our students. Please take the time to look through this month’s *Seeds of Social Justice* and use the resources, book the workshops, apply for grants, and continue to be part of the solution.

The Committee for Action on Social Justice’s Economic Justice Action Group has created a set of resources for Antipoverty Month which are posted on the BCTF website. See below for details. This edition of *Seeds of Social Justice* also links you to our many in-house resources, which help us work towards systemic change, as well as to our alliance partners who work hard every day to do the same.



## November

5–11: Veteran’s Week  
 11: Remembrance Day  
 17–23: BC Multiculturalism Week  
 20: National Child Day  
 20: Transgender Day of Remembrance  
 25: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women—16 days of action begins  
 27: Buy Nothing Day



### Resources



### Economic Justice



Family and Social Supports BC Services and Information from the BC Government

## Economic Justice



Infographics, 8.5" x 11"



Infographics, 8.5" x 11"

Please take a look at the [BCTF Social Justice Resource Booklet](#) (photographed above) and order resources for your local, school or classroom [here](#).

- [TogetherBC, British Columbia’s First-Ever Poverty Reduction Strategy 2019](#)
- [Staff Awareness and Understanding of Poverty Issues](#)
- [Poverty and School Attendance](#)
- [Antipoverty Month Activities](#)

## Workshops

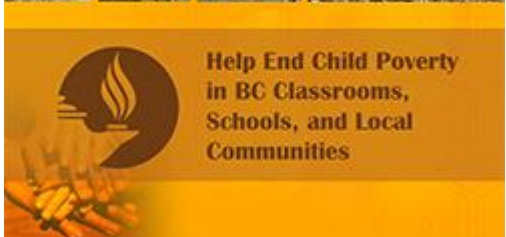


## Economic Justice



### Help End Child Poverty in BC Classrooms, Schools, and Local Communities

Participants will raise their awareness on poverty issues in their classrooms and communities by using the BCTF Social Justice Lens and the BCTF Aboriginal Lens. They will assess their own school, local and community needs. Then, they will be provided with the opportunity to work in groups on a plan of action that can be done during the workshop to address their student's needs on issues related to poverty.



### Poverty IS a Classroom Issue

In 2019, the BC Government finally moved to implement a poverty reduction plan that will begin to help the 20% of our children who live in poverty. This workshop helps teachers to develop an awareness of the issue of poverty and its implication for our students. It will provide challenges for teachers on the assumptions we make about children living in poverty and provide strategies for teachers on how to support children who may be experiencing discrimination at school because of their socio-economic status.

## Equity and Inclusion



## Economic Justice



During the current COVID-19 crisis, the inequities in society have become far more apparent, and in fact for many, things have become much worse. Government has introduced emergency financial benefits for those folks who have been adversely affected by the pandemic. What we need now is to rethink how society will continue to support all members of society and those that are most vulnerable.

Many of the resources in this edition of *Seeds* will help you have necessary conversations that can lead to systemic change. Let's take this opportunity to use the silver lining of this crisis that has shown what government programs targeted to those who are most need can do.

The following articles provide some opinions on this topic that are worth discussion:

- [This Pandemic Election is a Chance to Demand a better Future](#)
- [If We Just Treat COVID-19 as a Pandemic, We're Screwed](#)
- Press Progress: [COVID Recovery Survey](#)

## Opportunities for Members

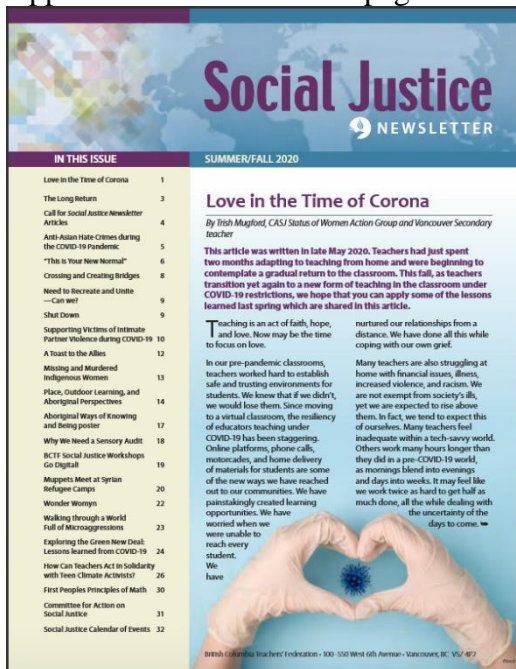


The Committee for Action on Social Justice (CASJ) has the following two openings:

- Antiracism Action Group (two-year term)
- LGBTQ2S+ Action Group (one-year term)



If you are interested in applying for either of these two positions, please follow this [link](#) to the BCTF Opportunities for Members page to find the application details. Deadline is November 5.



Do you have a story to share about a social justice activity or project that you have carried out in your classroom, local, or community? Is there a social justice issue that you would like to highlight for BCTF members? We are currently accepting articles up to December 15 for the Winter/Spring 2021 edition of the *Social Justice Newsletter*. For more information, see the [Social Justice Newsletter Submission Guidelines](#) on the [Social Justice Newsletter](#) page.

## Alliance Partners



## Economic Justice



Please visit our alliance partners' websites:

- **First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition** is a non-partisan coalition of 104 provincial and regional organizations who have united their voices to put children and youth first in BC through public education, community mobilization, and public policy advocacy.

Coalition members work together to make sure all BC's children and youth benefit from the **Four Keys to Success for Children and Youth**:

1. a strong commitment to early childhood development
2. support in transitions from childhood to youth and adulthood
3. increased economic equality
4. safe and caring communities.

- **BC Poverty Reduction Coalition** is a coalition that includes community and non-profit groups, faith groups, health organizations, First Nations and Aboriginal organizations, businesses, labour organizations, and social policy groups. They came together around a campaign aimed at seeing the introduction of an accountable, bold, and comprehensive poverty reduction plan from the government of British Columbia that would include legislated targets and timelines to significantly reduce poverty and homelessness. They seek to improve the health and well-being of all British Columbians. There are over 100 Coalition Members and almost 400 supporting organizations that have joined the call for a poverty reduction plan. Now that there is a provincial plan, we are envisioning our role going forward.

- **Raise the Rates** is a coalition of community groups and organizations concerned with the level of poverty and homelessness in British Columbia. They have been campaigning for ten years for a systemic solution to poverty: raising welfare and disability rates in BC. They organize with people in poverty and allies to make this happen. Their specialty is in creative political action that changes the narrative of poverty, and highlights the deep inequalities existing in BC. Poverty is a legislated policy.

## Grants & Awards

There are still grant funds available for members to access. Please consider applying for one of the following:

- **The Ed May Social Responsibility Education Fund** deadline is fast approaching on **November 20, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.**
- **The Local Social Justice Grants** are now on a first come, first serve basis until **April 10, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.**
- **The Provincial Social Justice Initiatives grant** is awarded on a yearly basis to support social justice projects that have an ongoing and systemic impact on teachers and students across the province and in their community. Projects may involve local community groups but should not be donations to these groups. The total amount of grant funds awarded in each school year is a maximum of \$5,000. This amount may be awarded to one applicant or divided between two applicants. The deadline is **December 2, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.**
- **Equity and Inclusion Grant** (Access to Local Presidents under Local Grants)
  - The Federation will provide up to 10 Equity and Inclusion Grants of up to \$6,000 each year, intended to support locals in conducting an audit of local processes and practices, and developing plans for greater equity and inclusion in the engagement, leadership, and work of the local on the following basis:
    1. This grant is intended to support locals in conducting an audit of local processes and practices, in order to develop a plan for greater equity and inclusion in the engagement, leadership, and work of the local.
    2. The audit plan and activities should be led by and include members from a range of equity seeking groups wherever possible.
    3. Locals shall submit an outline of proposed activities and/or audit plan, with estimated costs to obtain approval before undertaking action.

To learn about additional Grants, visit the [Social Justice Grants and Funds webpage](#) for more details and application forms.

Todd Patrick  
 Assistant Director of Social Justice  
 BC Teachers' Federation  
 100-550 West 6th Avenue  
 Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2  
 604-871-1850  
[tpatrick@bctf.ca](mailto:tpatrick@bctf.ca)