



Cyberbullying

Local Issue

Bullying is repeated, unwanted or aggressive behaviour meant to intimidate and make others uncomfortable, scared or hurt. It's often based on the other person's appearance, culture, race, religion, ethnicity, gender identity or sexual orientation. Actions can include threats, rumours, or attacking someone physically or verbally.

In Canada, up to 25 percent of children in grades four to six have been bullied and one in 10 children

have bullied others. Among cyberbullying victims, 73 percent report receiving threatening or aggressive texts, emails or instant messages.

Cyberbullying can lead to psychological effects in victims, including depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and physical illness. Bullying is a serious issue in Canada and the government is now beginning to implement anti-bullying legislation in schools to help stop it.

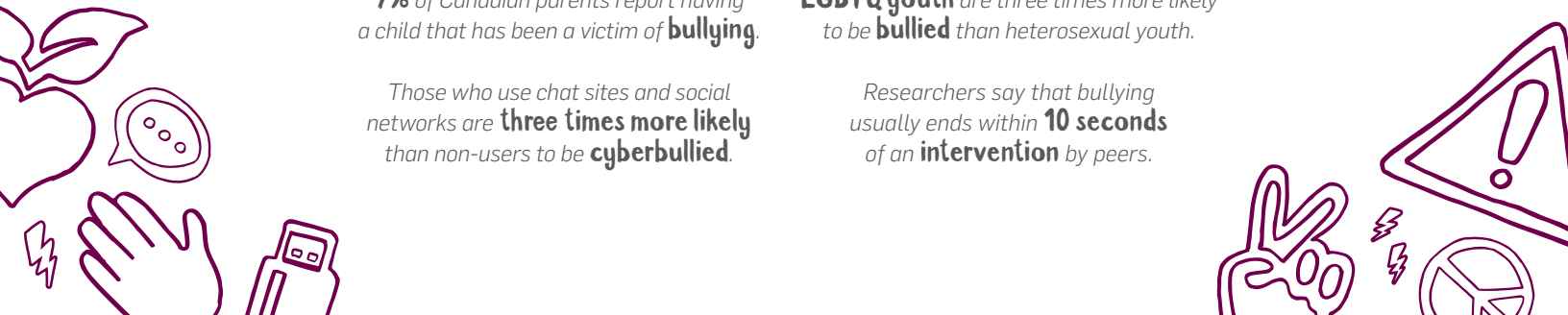
Fast Facts

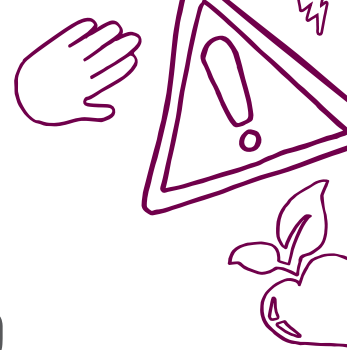
7% of Canadian parents report having a child that has been a victim of **bullying**.

Those who use chat sites and social networks are **three times more likely** than non-users to be **cyberbullied**.

LGBTQ youth are three times more likely to be **bullied** than heterosexual youth.

Researchers say that bullying usually ends within **10 seconds** of an **intervention** by peers.





Discussion Questions

1. What are some ways you can help someone you know who is being bullied online?
2. How would you respond to receiving unwelcome messages on social media?
3. What are some ways to make your online interactions more welcoming and respectful?

Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of cyberbullying at [WE.org/exploringissues](https://www.weriseabove.org/exploringissues).

Take Action

Rise above cyberbullying by posting facts on social media and rallying your school to raise awareness with **WE Rise Above**.





Environment

Local Issue

The planet is our home—a home we share with nearly 7.5 billion people. And each day, our actions have an impact on the environment and the future of our planet.

As the population continues to increase, more and more pressure is being put on the environment. We all need to do our part in ensuring future generations have a healthy world to live in. In almost every region, rising levels of consumption

are leaving countries struggling with increasing environmental issues and diminishing access to natural resources.

In order to protect our environment, we need to begin adapting more sustainable habits. Our environmental future depends on finding sustainable solutions to fix the damage that has been done and pave the way for a brighter future.

Fast Facts

*Canadian rivers discharge almost **9%** of the world's **renewable water** supply, while Canada has **less than 1%** of the world's population.*

*Canada's clean energy sector has **20 times** as much **solar electricity** as it did 10 years ago.*

*At least **8 million tonnes** of plastics leak into the ocean **each year**. That's the same as one garbage truck every single minute.*

*By **2025**, half of the world's population will be living in **water-stressed areas**.*



Discussion Questions



1. What everyday actions do you take that have an impact on the environment?
2. What are some simple ways you can develop sustainable consumption habits?
3. What steps can the government take to reverse major environmental damage?

Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of the environment at WE.org/exploringissues.

Take Action

Reduce your negative impacts and boost your positive ones with **WE Take Charge**.





Hunger

Local Issue

Thirteen percent of Canadians are in a state of food insecurity, which means they are unable to access a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. Without enough food, many people feel the effects of short-term hunger, like headaches, nausea and the inability to concentrate.

Each month, over 850,000 Canadians require help from food banks—more than one third of these individuals are children and youth.

People seeking food assistance come from all walks of life. Employment is no guarantee that someone will never struggle to provide enough food for their family. In fact, nearly one in six households that accessed a food bank in 2016 included someone who was employed.

Fast Facts



Nunavut has the highest documented rate of **food insecurity** for any Indigenous population living in a developed country.

Food bank use in Canada in **2016** was **28% higher** than in 2008.

The root cause of hunger in Canada is **low income**, which affects over **4 million** Canadians at any given time.

1 in 5 households in the territories are **food insecure**.





Discussion Questions



1. What health issues can come about as a result of hunger?
2. What are some examples of food that may be affordable but not nutritious?
3. How would your everyday life be different if you were to experience hunger on a daily basis? What are the long-term risks?

Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of hunger at [WE.org/exploringissues](https://www.ve.org/exploringissues).

Take Action

Want to help your community fight hunger? Take action with **WE Scare Hunger**.





Illiteracy

Local Issue

The definition of literacy is changing as our society transforms and grows. Low literacy is defined as having difficulty in reading, understanding and functioning effectively with written materials.

Being literate in the 21st century means having the ability to read, write and express critical thought through verbal, print, visual and digital formats.

According to Statistics Canada, 48 percent of adults age 16 and older don't have the literacy skills needed for the working world. Without proper literacy skills, things such as job applications, medication labels and basic signage can become inaccessible—decreasing the chances of a healthy and productive life.

Well-rounded literacy skills allow people to function at their full capacity. A better society is possible when literacy is seen as fundamentally important.

Fast Facts

*If **literacy rates** were improved by **1%**, the Canadian economy could see a **\$32 million boost**.*

*More than **60%** of Indigenous Canadians **do not have** the literacy skills necessary to fully **participate** in the current knowledge-based economy.*

***2 in 10** university graduates, **5 in 10** Canadian adults and **6 in 10** immigrants have **inadequate literacy**.*

*Over **15 million** Canadian adults will have **low literacy** by 2031.*





Discussion Questions

1. How different might your life be if you had never learned to read and write?
2. What does it mean to you to be literate?
3. What are some ways that society could benefit from having a higher level of overall literacy?



Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of literacy at [WE.org/exploringissues](https://www.weareteachers.com/we-read-together/).

Take Action

Increase awareness about the importance of literacy with **WE Read Together**.





Inclusion

Local Issue

Inclusion is when all people feel valued and respected, and have access to the same opportunities, regardless of physical or mental abilities, ethnicity, religion, culture or gender identity.

Disabilities come in a wide variety of forms, and many of them are not visible. This is why inclusive design is important to ensure everyone can benefit from the accessibility of all products and services.

For example, blind transit riders can find travel difficult without automated stop announcements, but including announcements benefits all riders.

Promoting inclusion allows people with diverse skills, abilities and experiences to offer different viewpoints and ideas. By focusing on people's capabilities, we can create equal opportunities for everyone and learn from each other along the way.

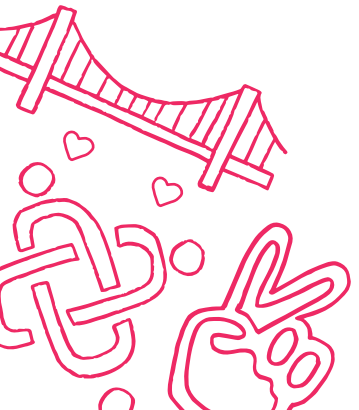
Fast Facts

41% of Canadian seniors report being **ignored** or treated as though they are invisible.

90% of people with disabilities do **as well or better** at their jobs than co-workers without a disability.

More than half of Canadian children with disabilities **do not have access** to the devices and aids they need.

Gender diverse workplaces are **15%** more likely to **outperform** their peers, and ethnically **diverse companies** are 35% more likely to do the same.





Discussion Questions

1. How does inclusion benefit everyone?
2. Why is inclusive design important?
3. What are a few examples of inclusion in your school? How do they affect other students?



Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of inclusion at [WE.org/exploringissues](https://www.weareone.org/exploringissues).

Take Action

Want to help your school and community become more inclusive? Take action with **WE Are One**.





Reconciliation

Local Issue

Reconciliation is a process of healing and restoring friendly relations—a process Canada is working toward between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians.

For over 100 years, Indigenous children in Canada were required to attend government-funded residential schools, which removed them from their communities and the influence parents had in the spiritual, cultural and intellectual development

of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children. The last residential school closed in 1996, but its legacy continues to affect Indigenous Peoples today.

The Government of Canada is working to renew a nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples, but all Canadians have a role to play in reconciliation. In 2008, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established, and in 2016, Canada adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Fast Facts

According to the United Nations, **70%** of Canada's **Indigenous languages** are currently **endangered**.

Since the **2008 recession**, Indigenous women have made the **largest employment gains** compared with non-Indigenous women and Indigenous men.

In **2015**, Canada elected a record number of **10 Indigenous MPs** to the House of Commons.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released **94 calls to action** in its final report.



Discussion Questions



1. Reconciliation is a process of mending broken relationships. What will your act of reconciliation be?
2. How has the history of residential schools affected Indigenous Peoples in Canada?
3. Whether you identify as Indigenous or non-Indigenous, what are some ways you can educate yourself and others about Indigenous histories and cultures?

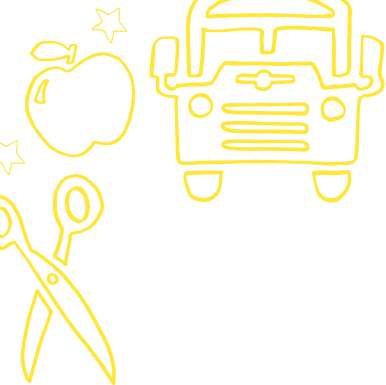
Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of reconciliation in Canada at [WE.org/exploringissues](https://www.wearecanadians.ca/we-stand-together).

Take Action

Want to be a part of the process of reconciliation between Canadians? Take action with **WE Stand Together**.





Education

Global Issue

With access to education, children gain the skills and tools to empower themselves and their communities. Yet, 58 million primary school-age children are currently not in school, and based on current trends, universal primary education will not be achieved until 2042.

On any given day, millions of children around the world face barriers that prevent them from attending school. Children often miss out due to a lack of

basic necessities like clean water or healthy food. Sometimes the closest school is hours from home. Other times, conflict, gender inequality, disabilities or cultural factors prevent them from gaining the education they deserve.

Education is the first step to breaking the cycle of poverty. It provides the opportunity for children to learn, grow and become empowered to lead the life they want to live.

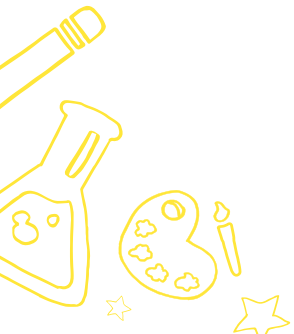
Fast Facts

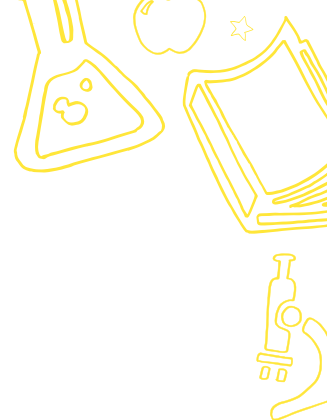
Enrolment in **primary education** in developing countries recently reached **91%**.

Currently, **50%** of primary school-age and **75%** of secondary school-age refugees are **out of school**.

By **2030** the United Nations hopes to ensure that **all children** receive primary and secondary education.

War and conflict is harming education worldwide. Between 2005 and 2015, schools in **26 countries** were used for **military purposes**.





Discussion Questions



1. What can be done to ensure every child receives an education?
2. What would you do if you weren't allowed to go to school? How would your life be different?
3. How do education standards vary across the world?

Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of access to education worldwide at [WE.org/exploringissues](https://www.ve.org/exploringissues).

Take Action

Want to help children in developing communities gain access to education? Take action with **WE Are Silent**.





Food

Global Issue

Healthy food fuels the minds of young learners. Without a steady supply of it, the brain and body can't get the nutrients they need to function at their full potential. Currently, nearly 800 million people do not have enough food to lead an active, productive life. That's approximately one in nine people. Many families suffering from food insecurity are forced to pull their children out of school to help with farming, leaving lifelong effects on the well-being of millions of youth around the world.

Many of the world's agriculture systems have been compromised by the pressure being put on natural resources. Our forests, fisheries, soils and oceans are being depleted at unprecedented rates, making it harder for developing regions that already struggle to feed their populations. In Africa, for example, 97 percent of staple crops are grown primarily through rainfall, making crop production extremely erratic.

Fast Facts

Approximately **159 million children** suffered from stunted growth in 2014, caused in part by **malnutrition**.

1.4 billion people have no access to electricity—making **energy poverty** a barrier to reducing hunger worldwide.

The **United Nations** has pledged to **end hunger** and malnutrition by **2030**.

Farming provides jobs for around **40%** of the world's population, making it the single **largest employer** in the world.



Discussion Questions



1. Why do you think women do not have equal access to farming? How can farming equality be improved?
2. How is food insecurity related to education, health and poverty?
3. What can be done to help feed the nearly 800 million people without access to enough food?

Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of access to food worldwide at WE.org/exploringissues.

Take Action

Want to help children in developing communities gain access to healthy food? Take action with **WE Bake For Change**.





Health

Global Issue

Health is a key factor in the livelihood of a population. Good health provides family stability and allows children to attend school. But, an estimated 400 million people worldwide currently lack access to essential health services.

People become trapped in a cycle of poverty when they are not healthy enough to participate in school, work and other daily activities. But preventative health measures such as immunizations and

checkups could help save millions of people each year. In fact, immunizations prevent between two and three million deaths every year, making it one of the world's most successful and cost-effective health interventions.

Good health leads to a prosperous life for more than just individuals—it influences the entire population. A healthy population contributes to the economy by being more productive in their everyday lives.

Fast Facts

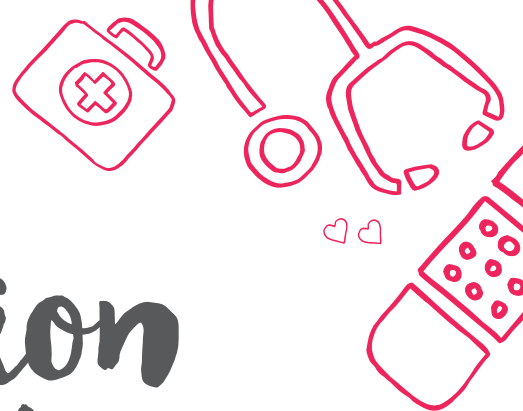
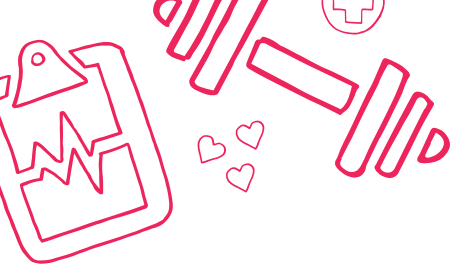


Approximately **32%** of every country's health expenditure comes from **out-of-pocket payments**.

Maternal mortality **declined by 44%** between 1990 and 2015.

All UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve **universal health coverage** by 2030.

45% of deaths among children under five occur in the **first month of life**.
Most of which are preventable.



Discussion Questions



1. How can we make health care accessible to everyone?
2. Why do you think poor health affects other aspects of life?
3. What are the consequences of not having access to health care?

Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of access to health care worldwide at [WE.org/exploringissues](https://www.we.org/exploringissues).

Take Action

Want to help children in developing communities access health care? Take action with **WE Give Health**.





Poverty

Global Issue

Poverty affects millions of people around the world, and in almost every country children are more likely to live in poverty than adults. This is not as simple as not having enough money. Poverty affects many aspects of life, including not being able to afford access to education, food, health care and job security. On a deeper level, poverty is not having access to opportunities to improve your livelihood and take control of your future.

The poorest half of the world's population has the same amount of combined wealth as the eight richest people on the planet. And for the one tenth of the global population that still lives on less than \$1.90 a day, poverty forces difficult decisions when it comes to basic necessities. No one should have to choose between water and food, or school fees and hospital bills, but for many this is reality.

Fast Facts

1 in 4 children *in the world's richest*
countries are **living in poverty.**

13% of the world's population lived below the poverty line in 2012, down from 26% in 2002.

18,000 children *die every day from causes related to* **poverty.**

The United Nations is aiming to **end extreme poverty** by **2030** as part of its Sustainable Development Goals.





Discussion Questions



1. What would you do if you had to live on less than \$2 a day?
2. How can the poorest half of the world escape the cycle of poverty?
3. Why do you think children are more likely to live in poverty than adults?

Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of access to opportunity worldwide at [WE.org/exploringissues](https://www.ve.org/exploringissues).

Take Action

Want to help families in developing communities earn a living? Take action with **WE Create Change**.





Water

Global Issue

Access to clean water can mean the difference between life and death. Since 1990, 2.6 billion people have gained access to improved drinking water sources, but there is still work to be done to improve the livelihood of the 663 million people without access to safe drinking water.

In developing communities, women and girls have the primary responsibility of collecting water from distant sources. This means they often miss out on school

and income-generating activities at home while hauling water for themselves and their families.

With access to clean water, families are able to have their girls attend school, watch their crops flourish at home and improve their personal health. Children are especially at risk for water-related diseases, and with better access to clean water school attendance rates increase—expanding the opportunities in children's lives.

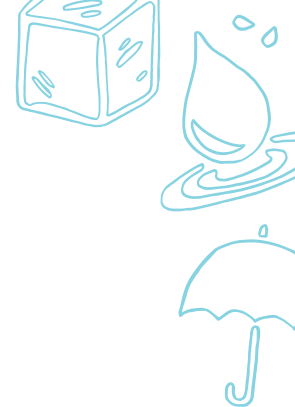
Fast Facts

42% of health care facilities in Africa **do not have access** to safe water.

91% of the world's population had access to an improved **drinking-water** source in **2015**, compared to only 76% in 1990.

Almost **900 children die** every day from diarrheal diseases caused by **unsafe water** and poor sanitation.

The **United Nations** is working to provide affordable access to **clean water** and adequate sanitation facilities to everyone on earth by **2030**.



Discussion Questions

1. How would your daily routine change if you did not have access to clean water?
2. Why do you think millions of people still do not have clean drinking water?
3. What do you think needs to be done to make clean water accessible to everyone?

Go Deeper

Check out more info and stats on the issue of access to clean water worldwide at [WE.org/explore/press-releases/](https://www.weforum.org/explore/press-releases/).

Take Action

Want to help children in developing communities access clean water? Take action with **WE Walk For Water**.

