What does it mean to be an informed and participating citizen in a democratic society? How many times a day do you hear and see things around you that prompt you to say (or think) “that’s not fair”? Well, now you have a chance to do something about it by entering the CCLET’s Bernard Chernos Youth Democracy Challenge.

Take the Challenge
Win $500!

Students are invited to take action for a specific cause or issue that concerns them in their community, country, or abroad. A prize of $500 and a copy of Uncivil Obedience by A. Alan Borovoy will be awarded to the student who demonstrates a true understanding of informed and active citizenship by using peaceful and lawful tactics to address an important issue.
Be Creative. Make it Your Own

There are many ways to advocate for a certain cause so think outside the box! Take advantage of your strengths to help improve the effectiveness of your advocacy campaign. Here are just a few examples of how you can use your fundamental freedoms in creative ways to challenge injustice and make change without having to resort to violence or breaking the law.

1) Freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication:
Contact your MP, city counsellor, principal, or local newspaper/TV station; raise awareness for your cause by composing a song, creating a work of art, or producing a video

2) Freedom of peaceful assembly: Organize a school rally, assembly or event; practice a day of silence with others who believe in your cause

3) Freedom of association: Start a petition; create a facebook group; start a youth advocacy club or association; join or start a political party

How will you use your rights?
What are your lawful and peaceful ideas?
COMPETITION RULES:

Eligibility: Open to students currently enrolled in elementary or secondary school in Canada. All entries must be submitted by March 31st each year. Winner will be notified by the end of June.

Requirements: Choose an issue that is unfair to you and take action. Provide us with a brief summary of your chosen issue, why you chose that issue, what you did to address it, any responses or results of your actions and/or what you hope to achieve. Be sure to also send us any accompanying multimedia files (your audio files, videos, websites, presentations, drawings, letters etc.).

Refer to the What’s Not Fair Checklist for tips to help make your advocacy project a success. Also available for download at: www.ccla.org/education-2/student-contests/democracy-challenge

Create a cover page with the following information and include it with your submission:

1) Your Name 4) Telephone Number
2) Age 5) School Name
3) Home Address 6) School Address

Send your cover page, summary, and accompanying multimedia files to the CCLET, post-marked or emailed no later than March 31st to be eligible for the democracy challenge:

e-mail: education@ccla.org
fax: (416) 861-1291
mail: 215 Spadina Ave., Suite 210, Toronto ON M5T 2C7
POSSIBLE ADVOCACY TOPICS:

To help you get started, here are a just few examples of what some young people have told us are injustices they face:

1) The minimum wage rate is lower for students and inexperienced workers in a number of provinces in Canada.
2) My school’s dress code prohibits me from wearing a certain article of clothing or a religious artifact.
3) Bullies are harassing and intimidating students at my school.
4) Some communities in Northern Canada don’t have access to running water, electricity or even a public school.
5) A store in my community will not allow more than a few students to enter the store at a time.
6) Or pick an issue that is closest to you.

Visit www.ccla.org/whatsnotfair for examples of what other youth advocates have done to address injustices they faced.