



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 councillor, 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.



Tips for Teachers & Contestants:

Here are a few guidelines to help make your advocacy project as successful as possible:

- ☑ **Be clear.** Make sure you clearly state and explain your chosen issue or problem and why it's important to you.
- ☑ **Keep it simple.** Narrow down the focus of your project to a specific issue or problem on which you think you can have the most impact. Instead of trying to solve world hunger, maybe focus on your community or providing breakfast programs at your school.
- ☑ **Identify realistic goals.** It's important to set realistic goals or targets for measuring your success. If you are organizing event to raise awareness, aim for a certain number of attendees. If you want to begin a letter writing campaign, follow up with the recipient until you receive a response.
- ☑ **Take advantage of your talents.** Use your particular strengths and interests to make your advocacy efforts unique and personal. If you have a knack for filmmaking or visual arts, why not organize a screening or gallery of your own work and/or other artists to increase awareness of your issue in your school or community?
- ☑ **Be strategic.** Maximize the effectiveness of your advocacy efforts by planning and researching the most strategic way of achieving your goal. If you are writing a letter to an organization or to the media, do some research to find out which individual would be the most appropriate recipient in terms of their ability to take your desired action.
- ☑ Make sure your actions are entirely **peaceful and lawful**.
- ☑ **Implement your plan.** Now that you've got a strategy, take action! Show us some evidence that you've implemented your action plan. Send us a copy of your letter and any responses you've received. Take pictures or videos of your event or share any media coverage/social media attention you've received as a result of your actions.