

# INFORMATION FOR PARENTS DURING THE G8/G20 CONVERGENCE IN TORONTO

Bringing your child to an event/action can be a positive experience for both you and your child, as a **first example (or a reminder) of the value of and possibilities for collective action.**

There are, however, particular concerns about bringing your child to an event/action. It may be that police will target parents with children, *especially at high-risk actions.* **Although this is VERY UNLIKELY, you might want to be prepared.**

## IF YOU ARE ARRESTED AT AN EVENT/ACTION WITH YOUR CHILD

If you are arrested at an event while you are with your child, the police will ask you for the contact information of a person who can pick up your child. It is not clear that your children will be brought with you to the Prisoner Processing Center (at 629 Eastern Avenue) or a police station.

**Your child may be transferred to one of two “emergency daycares” run by the Children's Aid Society (CAS) and/ or the City of Toronto. It is not clear where those emergency daycares will be located.**

It is likely that the CAS or the City of Toronto will require that the child be picked up within a short period, such as a few hours. Before the child is released, “emergency daycare” staff will run a background check (including a police record check) on the emergency contact. If the daycare staff are not satisfied by the results of the background check, they will not release the child from the daycare to the emergency contact. In that case, the child will remain at the “emergency daycare”.

If your child remains at the “emergency daycare”, a CAS file may be opened. Even though the CAS has committed to closing that file after you are released, the fact that a file was opened at all might mean further CAS involvement in your life. This might be a particular concern if you are poor, First Nations, a person with precarious immigration status, Queer or have mental health issues.

## CHOOSING AN EMERGENCY CONTACT TO PICK UP YOUR CHILD

If you do decide to bring your child to an event, have the contact information of *at least one* person who can pick your child up at the detention centre, police station or the “emergency daycare” centre. You might want to write down the person's contact information, and keep one copy with you and one copy with your child. You might want to pin the paper with the emergency contact information inside your child's clothes or keep it in their pocket.

It is important that the emergency contact person **not have a criminal or police record**, since daycare staff will likely run a background check before the emergency contact person can pick up the child. Note that people with experience of the mental health system may show up on “police record checks”.

Your emergency contact person should be **easily accessible by phone** and available on **short notice** during the event/action. Your emergency contact person should also be able to **travel quickly** to the detention centre, police station or the emergency daycare. If your emergency contact drives a car to pick up the child from the emergency daycare, staff may require that person to have a **car seat** that is appropriate for the child's age and weight.

## RESEARCH THE EVENT/ ACTION AHEAD OF TIME

The decision to bring your child may depend on the nature of the event. The Toronto Community Mobilization Network (TCMN) has a calendar of events with levels of risk assigned: <http://g20.torontomobilize.org/schedule>. Those risk levels are not a guarantee of how aggressively they will be policed. Instead, they are the organizers' description of the 'tone' of the action.

## DURING THE G8/G20 CONVERGENCE

The TCMN has some childcare options available during the Convergence. They can be contacted at [g20childcare@gmail.com](mailto:g20childcare@gmail.com). For more information, see <http://g20.torontomobilize.org/>.

It is important that parents have a *solid network and support system* during the event/action. You might want to set up an affinity group (possibly including people *without children*). If you want help joining or setting up an affinity group, you can email: [community.mobilize@resist.ca](mailto:community.mobilize@resist.ca).

It is important to keep up with the "atmosphere" of the event/action. To do that, you check in with the event organizers or other people around you during the event/action. **Parents should consider preparing a "contingency" plan to exit the event quickly with their children if the "atmosphere" changes.**

If you are a breastfeeding mother and are detained by the police, make sure to alert the police clearly (in the presence of other people, if possible) to your and your child's need to breastfeed.

## SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Of course, there are also practical considerations about bringing children to political events/actions.

- There will not be washrooms easily available.
- Some of the events/actions will be very busy. Take note of what your child is wearing before the event, in case you are separated.
- If they are old enough, you might consider setting your child up with a small backpack with some first aid supplies, change of clothes, some money, water, a snack, the emergency contact's information, and any other essential supplies the child may need.
- Make sure to bring with you - or include in your child's backpack - a copy of the prescription for any medication that your child may require.

## CONTACT THE MOVEMENT DEFENCE COMMITTEE – SUMMIT LEGAL SUPPORT PROJECT

If you are arrested or see someone arrested: 416 273 6761

If you are inquiring about arrested friends/family: 416 273 6781

If you use TTY: 416 531 0060

<http://www.movementdefence.org>

