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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner notes children's rights to privacy and information to mark National Child Day

WHITEHORSE – Yukon Information and Privacy Commissioner Diane McLeod-McKay is taking time this week to mark National Child Day and to highlight the privacy and information rights of children and youth.

National Child Day is held annually on November 20th to recognize the rights held by children and youth and as a reminder that governments are obligated to uphold these rights. On this day in 1989, the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The convention outlines children's rights to an adequate standard of living, rest and leisure, education, protection from violence and abuse, and many other rights.

“Several articles in the UN convention deal specifically with children's rights to information, freedom of expression and privacy,” said McLeod-McKay. “For example, Article 16 notes that children shall not be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy, nor to unlawful attacks on their honour and reputation. For young people, the risk of reputational harm is key, partly due to the wide use of social media. Although social media have expanded our rights to freedom of expression, they have also created new risks to privacy.”

Privacy Commissioners in Canada have been working to protect the privacy rights of children and youth. McLeod-McKay notes that more improvements are needed to Canada's privacy laws, although changes are beginning to happen. Earlier this week, *An Act to enact the Consumer Privacy Protection Act and the Personal Information and Data Protection Tribunal Act* was tabled in the House of Commons. It applies to private sector organizations and includes the right to be forgotten.

(2)

“This is very positive,” said McLeod-McKay. “These changes enable people to ask an organization to dispose of personal information, including that social media posts be deleted.”

Under this Act, the Privacy Commissioner of Canada has order-making power and may recommend fines for failure to comply with requirements in the *Consumer Privacy Protection Act*. These fines are significant, up to the higher of \$10 million or 3 per cent of the organization’s gross global revenue in the year prior to imposition of the penalty.

McLeod-McKay is working with the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate, Annette King, to mark National Child Day this week. “Our office advocates for the rights of children and youth, including the right to privacy,” said King. “I am constantly reminded that the best place to begin is with awareness of these rights in the first place. One of my greatest concerns is that citizens may not realize that children are citizens who have rights, or that government and other agencies are responsible to uphold these rights.”

This week, McLeod-McKay will speak with Whitehorse teen Max Zimmermann, who is the host of *Global Action, Local Voices* about privacy rights. This video series project is youth-led and broadcast on Facebook and Instagram. “I’m very proud to help focus attention on the rights of children and youth, including the right to privacy, through the voices and perspectives of young people,” said Zimmermann.

McLeod-McKay did an earlier interview with Zimmermann this fall on similar topics. It can be viewed at www.ycao.ca/social-media.

The Ombudsman, Information and Privacy Commissioner, and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner is an independent officer of the Yukon Legislative Assembly. For more information, please go to www.yukonombudsman.ca.

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