

NEWS RELEASE — Families for School Seismic Safety

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For Immediate Release

Vancouver's Families for School Seismic Safety responds to today's deaths of 100s of children in Pakistan quake

VANCOUVER — In response to the tragic news that hundreds of children are dead following their school's collapse today in north-west Pakistan, the saddened members of Families for School Seismic Safety (FSSS) are calling on all governments to make the safety of schoolchildren a top priority.

“We know it is the bad buildings that kill, not the earthquakes themselves,” says Patti Bacchus, a member of FSSS. “We know which buildings are dangerous and we know how to fix them. So why are children still being killed?” asks Bacchus.

While FSSS is pleased that BC's provincial government has pledged to bring all at-risk public schools up to standard by 2019, Bacchus says FSSS wants the provincial and federal governments to work together to fast-track upgrades to protect BC's children.

“We know that in Vancouver alone, the majority of public schools have been designated ‘high-risk’ structures in the event of an earthquake” Bacchus notes.

BBC reported today that “a 7.6-magnitude quake with the epicentre 80 km (50 miles) north-east of Islamabad wiped out several villages. In one incident, 400 children were reported to have died when their school collapsed in north-west Pakistan.”

FSSS extends its deepest sympathy to the families and communities devastated by today's earthquakes.