



## UPDATE: Poverty Reduction in Ontario

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### Where we are now:

- **Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy** commits to cut 2008 child poverty rate (15.2%) by 25% by 2013. **Poverty Reduction Act** 2009 ensures annual reporting on progress, public consultation and updates to Strategy every 5 years.
- **Progress since 2008:** Minimum wage increased to \$10.25 (2010). Phased in full-day kindergarten for 4&5 year olds. Ontario Child Benefit increased to \$92/mo. \$600M investment to build affordable housing (ends 2011). Expansion of dental programs for low income children & youth. Funding to maintain child care subsidies for short term. New protections for temp workers & more employment standards officers hired.
- For full analysis see [www.25in5.ca](http://www.25in5.ca) 'Year Two of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy'
- **November 2010:** new Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy released. Will replace Social Housing Reform Act & explore new Housing Benefit. But no \$ or commitment to build affordable housing to address waitlist of 141,000 households.
- **Social Assistance Review** launched to develop action plan to make social assistance "more effective at getting people into jobs; easier to understand; work better with other income security programs; financially sustainable". (Jan 2011-June 2012). Special Diet Allowance will continue & be reviewed within Social Assistance Review.

### What can YOU do to keep up the pressure?

- **Support the call for \$100/month Healthy Food Supplement for social assistance recipients.** Go to <http://putfoodinthebudget.ca>
- **Input to pre-budget consultations** by asking Finance Minister to raise social assistance rates; invest in affordable housing; bring in Ontario Housing Benefit; increase OCB to \$125/mo; invest to stabilize child care system.  
Email [submissions@ontario.ca](mailto:submissions@ontario.ca) and your MPP
- **Get prepared to input to Social Assistance Review** Commissioners FLankin and MSheikh. Details on how to submit/present to follow...
- Check [www.stableandaffordable.com](http://www.stableandaffordable.com) & email/meet with your MPP re Housing Strategy asks
- **Join the 25 in 5 Network for Poverty Reduction** and get updates at [www.25in5.ca](http://www.25in5.ca)
- **Continue to support Campaign 2000.** [www.campaign2000.ca](http://www.campaign2000.ca)