



END CHILD & FAMILY POVERTY IN CANADA

MEDIA RELEASE

November 24, 2010

2010 Report Card on Child Poverty in Ontario

Toronto –Ontario’s child poverty rate is on the rise with more than 1 in every 6 children growing up in a low income household, says a new report from the anti-poverty coalition Ontario Campaign 2000. The Ontario government needs to step up investment or it will not meet its target to cut child poverty by 25% by 2013.

“The recession and the tattered state of our social safety net programs like EI and social assistance have made Ontario’s poverty problem worse. The Ontario government showed bold leadership in 2008 by developing a poverty reduction strategy. But we need the Province to move faster to fix social assistance and raise rates, make housing more affordable, and support a Good Jobs Strategy. And we need the federal government to step up to the plate as an active partner in Ontario’s poverty reduction plan,” said Jacquie Maund, Coordinator of Ontario Campaign 2000.

“*Poverty Reduction: Key to Economic Recovery for Ontario Families*”, credits the Ontario government for making smart investments in programs that support Ontario families, despite the tight fiscal situation. These include full day kindergarten, the Ontario Child Benefit, and saving subsidized child care spaces. But the poorest people – those depending on social assistance – are struggling on welfare benefits which are as low now as they were in 1967 in terms of purchasing power.

Almost one-third of all low income children live in working poor families. “We see daily the challenges of parents struggling to make ends meet when the only work they can find are temp or contract jobs with low wages, no benefits, and no security. This is a real problem for immigrants and racialized workers in particular. We call on the provincial government to expand our labour laws to protect workers in these precarious jobs. We need a Good Jobs Strategy that leads to more full time, permanent jobs with decent pay and benefits,” said Deena Ladd, Coordinator of the Workers Action Centre.

“Growing up in poverty has a long term impact on a child’s health and wellbeing. Governments are concerned about the growing cost of health care, but investing upfront to cut child poverty rates will lead to better health outcomes in the long run,” said David McNeil, President of the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario (RNAO).

The report calls on the Ontario government to take action in three areas:

- Start the promised Social Assistance Review and raise adult rates with a \$100/month Healthy Food Supplement
- Release the promised Long Term Affordable Housing Strategy, including a new monthly Housing Benefit for low-income tenants;
- Develop a Good Jobs Strategy in partnership with business and labour that leads to more full time permanent jobs with good pay and benefits.

-30-

For further comment please contact: Jacquie Maund, 416-595-9230 x 241 or cell 416-318-7440

Deena Ladd 416-531-0778 x222

To view the report see www.campaign2000.ca/Ontario/index.html