



Child Poverty Persists Time to Invest in Children and Families

2003 Report Card on Child Poverty in Ontario

The persistence of child poverty in Ontario is a clear indication that economic growth alone is not sufficient to ensure the well-being of children and families. At a time of economic prosperity:

- 390,000 children remain in poverty in Ontario - an increase of 41% since 1989.
- The child poverty rate of 14.4% for 2000 is now significantly higher than the rate of 11.4% achieved during the peak of the last economic boom in 1989.
- 40% of low income children would need more than \$10,000 to reach the poverty line.
- Low-income female lone parent families remain, on average, \$8,600 below the poverty line. Among low-income two-parent families, the average gap between income and the poverty line actually widened by nearly \$900 since 1996 to almost \$10,500 by 2000.

Public policy must play a stronger and more deliberate role in ensuring that all families can share in our province's prosperity. A comprehensive social investment strategy is needed to ensure that no child lives in conditions of disadvantage and poverty. Strategic investments in the following five key areas are crucial to achieving substantial progress in reducing child and family poverty:

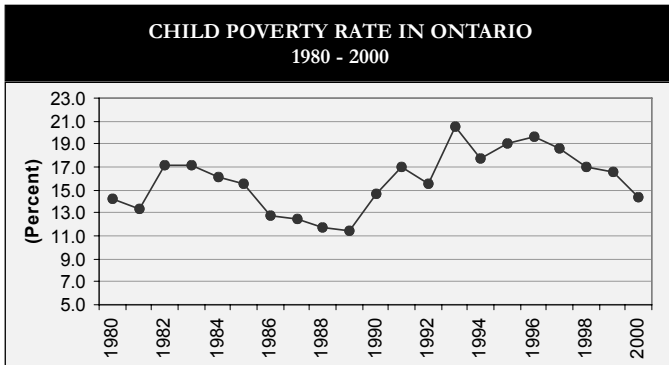
Benchmarks for Success	Current Conditions for Families and Children
Policies that promote jobs with good wages and working conditions that support families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even during the peak of the economic cycle in 2000, 102,000 low income children lived in families where at least one parent worked full time - that's 1 in 4 of all poor children. • Ontario's minimum wage has been frozen at \$6.85 for seven long years despite a 15% rise in inflation over that period.
A system of social assistance that provides economic security, dignity, and opportunities for training and development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has been nearly 10 years since there has been any increase in social assistance rates. • Benefits for families with children are only 50% to 60% of what is needed to reach the poverty line. • The Province of Ontario claws back every penny of the National Child Benefit supplement from children whose families live on meager social assistance benefits.
A system of quality, affordable Early Childhood Education and Care services that are available to families in every community across Ontario.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulated child care spaces meet the needs of less than 9% of children under 12 in Ontario. • Ontario's spending on regulated child care has declined by more than \$160 million since 1995 (in 2002 dollars). • Out of a total of more than \$266 million in federal funds provided under the Early Childhood Development Initiative over the past two years Ontario has not invested a single dollar in regulated child care.
Access to safe, affordable housing for families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1995, the province cancelled all new social housing starts. • Without rent controls, rents in Ontario continued to rise at rates faster than inflation; by 2002 the average overall rent in Ontario jumped again by 2.5% to \$815. • Ontario is using loopholes in the federal/provincial National Housing Agreement to pass provincial costs for new affordable housing down to municipalities.
A public education system that addresses the wide range of children's educational and developmental needs as well as affordable access to post-secondary studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The education funding formula has resulted in cuts to English as a Second Language programs, access to school psychologists and social workers, and many programs and services essential to supporting the inclusion of children with special needs. • Families in the top 25% income bracket are 2.5 times more likely to pursue a university education than those at the lower end. • Average fees for undergraduate programs have increased by nearly 70% since 1995-96.

Campaign 2000



Deep Poverty Persists Despite Prosperity

The latest figures show that 390,000 children in Ontario live in poverty.¹ Many children and families have been left behind in prosperous times.

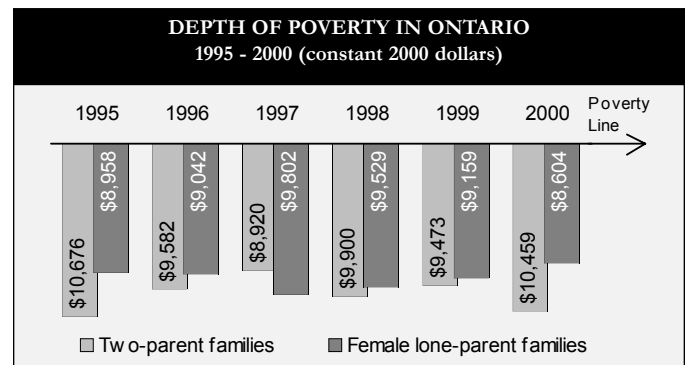


Prepared by the Canadian Council on Social Development using *Income Trends in Canada 1980-2000*, Statistics Canada 13F0022XCB.

Strong economic growth is a significant factor in leading to cyclical reductions in family poverty. However, there are limits to what the economy by itself can accomplish in fighting child poverty. While at first glance the more recent downward trend in child poverty could be a cause for encouragement, the long-term view is far more troubling. **The child poverty rate of 14.4% for 2000 remains significantly higher than the 11.4% figure achieved during the peak of the last economic boom in 1989.**

There are two main conclusions that can be drawn from the economic cycles of the past two decades. First, cuts to the social safety net drove up child poverty rates to levels that were higher overall through the 1990s than in the 1980s. Second, while poverty levels fluctuate along with economic booms and busts, a child poverty rate above 11% persisted even during the best of times.

The severity of economic insecurity among those who remain in poverty is a cause for serious concern. Forty percent of poor children would need \$10,000 or more just to reach the poverty line. (known as the depth of poverty).² Since 1996 there has not been a significant improvement for families who live in poverty. **Low-income female lone parent families remain, on average, \$8,600 below the poverty line. Among low-income two-parent families, the average gap between income and the poverty line actually widened by nearly \$900 since 1996 to almost \$10,500 by 2000.**



Prepared by the Canadian Council on Social Development using *Income Trends in Canada 1980-2000*, Statistics Canada 13F0022XCB.

The latest economic boom may have accomplished all it can in terms of reducing child poverty. An economic slowdown would have severe implications for vulnerable families and children in Ontario and would result in rising poverty levels. It is unlikely that Ontario's export driven economy can sustain its recent prosperous run over the medium term, given the economic downturn with our major trading partner, the U.S. To significantly reduce child poverty governments need to act. Rebuilding Ontario's social safety net to prevent significant rises in child poverty during a cyclical downturn should be a priority.

A New Approach to Address Child Poverty is Needed

Economic growth and tax cuts have been the Ontario government's answer to ensuring the income security needs of families. At the same time the government has failed to invest in social supports that families rely on. The persistence of child poverty in Ontario is a clear indication that a more effective strategy for ensuring the well-being of children is needed:

- The rate of child poverty among female lone-parent families is 43%.
- Younger children are more likely to experience poverty; the rate of child poverty among children aged 0 to 2 is 16% compared with a rate of 13.9% for children aged 6 to 17.
- Food bank use continues to rise in Ontario, with more than 120,000 children requiring emergency food assistance in 2002.
- Among Aboriginal children, whether living on or off reserve, almost one in two (45%) lives in poverty. Aboriginal peoples are 4 times more likely to report ever experiencing hunger than the non-Aboriginal population.³
- Children with disabilities and their families face immense financial, social and emotional stresses. More than one in three children with a disability lives in a low income family.
- Among racialized groups in Ontario, rates of child poverty are upwards of 40%.

→ Recent immigrants living in Ontario's urban centres face significant barriers to achieving economic security as evidenced by poverty rates of 48%.

A new approach to reducing poverty is needed in Ontario. The focus must shift away from general tax cuts to rebuilding the province's fiscal capacity to act strategically for children. General tax cuts have resulted in depleted public revenues available for social priorities such as schools, health care, child care, libraries, recreational centres, and other community services. Tax relief has been targeted to those far up the income scale. Little or no benefit has come to low and modest income families who face decreased services, more user fees for programs, and rising costs for basic needs such as housing.

To successfully guarantee the well-being of *all* children, governments must play a stronger and more deliberate role in ensuring that *all* families can share in our collective prosperity. Government programs can have a dramatic impact on the well-being of children by substantially reducing child poverty; but the outcomes will depend on the level of investment. Investments are needed that can respond to the particular needs of disadvantaged populations while supporting all families in income security, affordable housing, quality community programs and stable jobs with adequate pay.

Building Labour Market Policies to Reduce Poverty

Good jobs that adequately support families are a key component in reducing child poverty. However this is not the reality for many families who work part-time, contract, or seasonal jobs that are often low paying and do not offer benefits.

Employment does not guarantee that a family will escape poverty. **At the peak of the economic cycle in 2000, 102,000 poor children - one in four of all poor children - lived in families where at least one parent worked full time.**

While economic growth has led to reduced welfare caseloads, many of the welfare and unemployed poor have become the working poor. Many parents continue to work in near-minimum wage jobs that pay wages far below the poverty line. In a City of Toronto Social Services survey of people who left social assistance in 2001, 57% reported that they were in a worse financial situation after leaving social assistance. The likelihood of being late with the rent actually increased among those who entered the low wage job market.

Provincial government policy is not stepping up to help parents escape poverty through paid work. Quality training and education opportunities, an increased supply of good jobs and raising minimum wages at

the provincial level are needed to complement the role of child benefits in reducing poverty. The federal government announced significant steps in the 2003 budget to increase the Canada Child Tax Benefit to a maximum of \$3,495 for the first child. **But Ontario's minimum wage has been frozen at \$6.85 an hour for seven long years despite a 15% rise in the cost of living.** As the following table illustrates, minimum wage levels are far from adequate. While in 1995 Canada's richest province also had its most generous minimum wage, it has now slipped to fourth place in the country.

WAGES REQUIRED TO REACH POVERTY LINE FOR FULL-TIME, MINIMUM WAGE WORKERS IN ONTARIO (2002)

Family type	Full time market earnings and Canada Child Tax Benefit ⁴	Low Income Cut-off (LICO)	Hourly wages required to reach poverty line	Hourly gap between minimum wage and wage needed to reach LICO
Single parent, 1 child	\$15,139	\$20,651	\$11.3	\$4.45
1 earner, 2 children	\$17,605	\$25,684	\$14.11	\$7.26
2 earners, 2 children	\$30,072	\$31,090	\$8.54 x 2	\$1.69 x 2

Source: HRDC Labour Division; National Council of Welfare website www.ncwcnbes.net, 2003. ⁴

Ensuring Income Security through Social Assistance

Financial and social supports for families and children undergoing difficult transitions in their lives are crucial for their well-being. When given the opportunity parents will join the labour market and social assistance caseloads will decline. However, good jobs that provide families with economic security are not available to all.

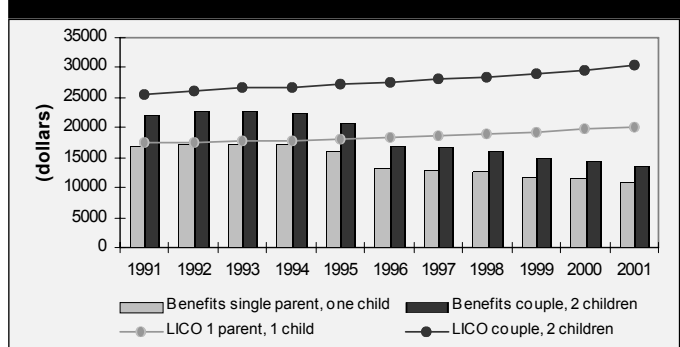
While Employment Insurance (EI) should be the first line of defence for unemployed parents, tightened eligibility rules mean that the rate of unemployed workers receiving benefits has dropped to 25% from 75% at the beginning of the 1990s in Ontario. Among those who find themselves out of the labour market and who cannot qualify for EI, social assistance is the program of last resort.

More than 131,000 families with almost 230,000 children remained on social assistance in 2001. The majority of these families cycle on and off welfare. A variety of factors including unemployment, underemployment, illness, disability, and a lack of supports mean that some must rely on social assistance for extended periods of time.

It has been nearly 10 years since there has been any increase in welfare rates. When inflation is factored in, the cuts to welfare in 1995 now amount to a loss in benefits of more than 35%. While most other income

security programs in Canada including the Canada Child Tax Benefit and Old Age Security are adjusted to inflation, the purchasing power of families on social assistance diminishes every year. **Welfare Benefits for families with children are now 50% to 60% of what would be needed to reach the poverty line.**

ONTARIO WELFARE INCOMES AND LOW INCOME CUT-OFFS 1991 - 2001 (2001 DOLLARS)



National Council of Welfare, *Welfare Incomes 2000-2001*, Spring 2002. LICO data prepared by the Canadian Council on Social Development using Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-Offs, from *Low Income Cut-offs from 1991 to 2000 Catalogue # 75F0002MIE-01007*, November 2001. ⁵



Paying the Rent and Feeding the Kids: A First Step for Families

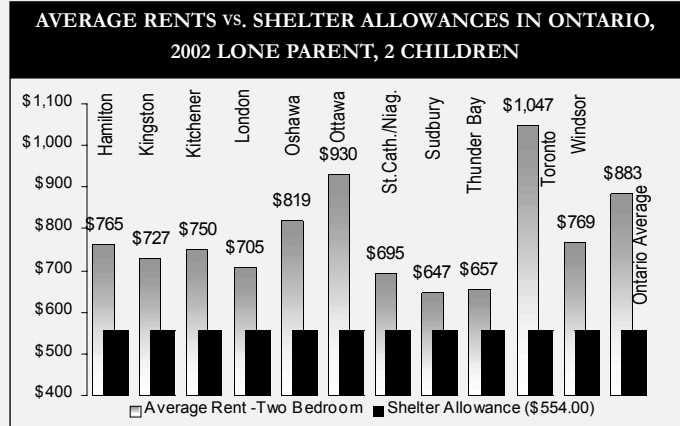
A social assistance cheque is made up of two portions: a shelter allowance to pay for housing, and a basic needs allowance for all other expenses. The end of rent controls combined with a lack of affordable housing and frozen welfare rates mean that shelter allowances continue to fall further from the rising costs of rents. When rent exceeds shelter allowances, families must dip into their limited budgets for food, clothing and other expenses.

A lone parent family with two children in Ontario receives \$554 in a shelter allowance and \$532 in a basic needs allowance. The average provincial rent for a two bedroom apartment is \$883 which means that this family is left with \$200 for food, clothing and all other expenses.

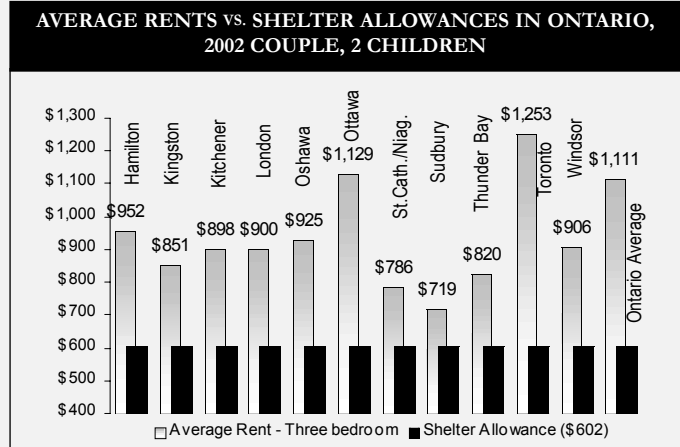
A couple with two children receives a \$602 shelter allowance and a \$576 basic allowance. The average rent in Ontario for a three bedroom apartment is \$1,111 which leaves \$67 for all other expenses.



Immediate action must be taken to prevent any family from facing homelessness or missing meals just to pay the rent. Since social assistance was cut by 21.6% in 1995 there has not been any rate increase. Ensuring that shelter allowances are enough to afford average rents would represent a significant and achievable first step in ensuring the income security of families on social assistance.



Rent data from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, *Ontario Rental Market Report*, November 2002. Shelter allowance data from Pay the Rent Feed the Kids Campaign, *Fact Sheet*, 2002.



Rent data from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, *Ontario Rental Market Report*, November 2002. Shelter allowance data from Pay the Rent Feed the Kids Campaign, *Fact Sheet*, 2002.

Ending the Child Benefit Clawback and Supporting Families

The Canada Child Tax Benefit is composed of a base benefit that about 80% of Canadian families receive and a supplement called the National Child Benefit that is targeted to low-income families. In July 2003 the National Child Benefit supplement will increase to a maximum of \$1,463 per year for the first child. Unfortunately, Ontario claws back every penny of this amount from families on social assistance. **In 2001, \$183 million in federal payments were deducted from families on social assistance and reallocated in cash benefits for working families - that is approximately \$940/year per child on social assistance which is lost.**

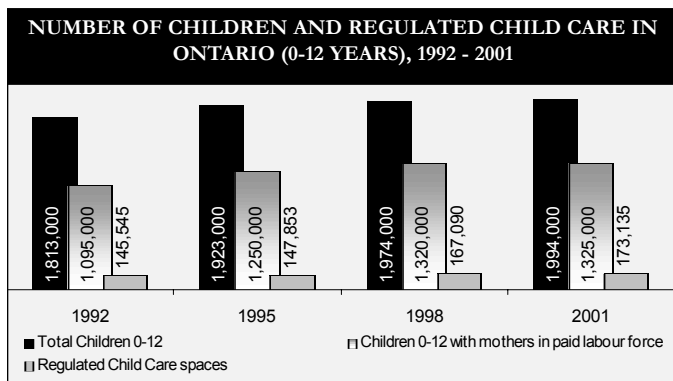
The province claims that the supplement is a disincentive to work; but the

needs of parents would be better addressed by policies that remove the real barriers to employment. The government has chosen to slash benefits, place unwarranted barriers on families through workfare, and seek the shortest route into the labour market for recipients. **Additionally, Ontario remains the only province in Canada that does not extend even the most limited health benefit coverage for families with children leaving social assistance for low paying jobs.** An alternative approach is needed to ensure families have access to a reasonable level of income for shelter and other needs while investing in supports such as quality child care, training and education programs geared to individual human and labour market development.

Investing in Early Childhood Education and Care

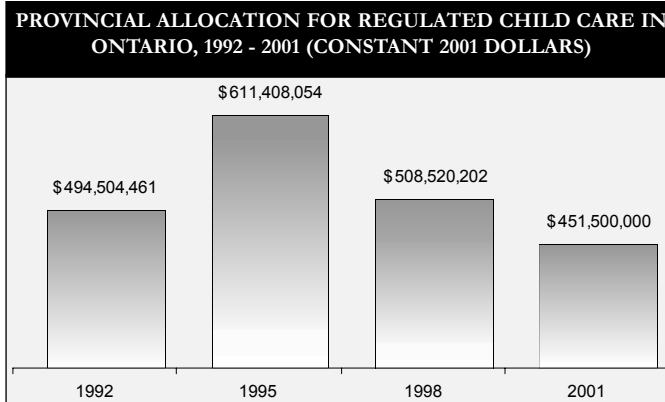
Quality child care services are an essential cornerstone of a strategy to reduce poverty. Early Childhood Education and Care services enhance children's well-being and development and strengthen the foundation for lifelong learning; support parents in education, training, and employment; and promote equal opportunities for women in the labour market.

For Ontario's 2,000,000 children twelve years and younger, there are only 173,130 regulated centre and family-based child care, nursery school, and after-school spaces. **The available stock of regulated child care fails to meet the need of more than 90% of children in Ontario.** Among the 70% of families where mothers work, available spaces would only meet the needs of 12% of their children.



Childcare Resource and Research Unit, *Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2001*. December 2002.

Rather than addressing the critical shortage of quality child care services, the provincial government has reduced its investment. Ontario's spending on regulated child care has declined by more than \$160 million since 1995. These cuts mean that parents must shoulder an increasing portion of the costs of care. Ontario has the highest monthly fees for full-time, centre based care in Canada. Parents using centre-based child care typically pay annual fees of \$10,000 for an infant, \$6,600 for a preschooler, and \$4,000 for a school-age child. Fees for regulated family child care are only slightly lower. To further compound the financial crisis in the child care sector, municipal downloading in 1997/1998 passed many of the costs of wage grants, resource centres, and special needs programs to overburdened municipalities.



Childcare Resource and Research Unit, *Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2001*. December 2002.

It has not been for a lack of resources or opportunities that the provincial government has neglected Early Childhood Education and Care in Ontario. The Federal-Provincial Agreement on Early Childhood Development (September 2000) promised action on common priorities for children, including child care. Since 2001, the provincial government continues to deliberately divert early years federal transfers from quality child care programs. **Out of a total of more than \$266 million in federal funds provided under the Early Childhood Development Initiative over the past two years, Ontario has not invested a single dollar in quality child care.**

Families in Ontario desperately need provincial cooperation. The Ontario government must make new provincial dollars available to bolster federal efforts and work constructively towards building a quality child care system that meets the needs of children and families. Over the next three years, the federal Early Childhood Development Agreement will transfer approximately \$190 million per year to the province.

In addition, the 2003 federal budget dedicated new dollars to those provinces with an interest in investing in regulated child care. Ontario's share of these funds will be \$10 million in the first year and \$30 million in the second year. Although the new federal transfer is less than what is needed, reaching federal-provincial agreement on the expansion of regulated child care is a promising step for families and should be a catalyst for action in Ontario.

Meeting the Educational and Developmental Needs of All Children

Since first being elected, the government has cut annual funding to public schools by \$2 billion. Because the funding formula narrowly defines classroom activities, it is jeopardizing many programs that are essential to promoting socially inclusive communities and supporting families and children.

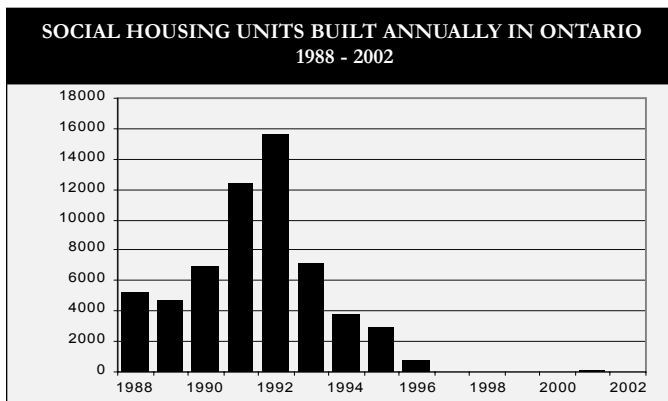
Years of funding neglect of public schools have resulted in reduced access to critical early intervention and child development programs. Since the funding formula was introduced, schools report reductions in English as a second language programs, dwindling access to school psychologists and social workers, as well as reduced resources to support the inclusion of children with special needs and children at risk due to socio-economic factors.

The impact of education funding cuts has been felt across the province. Access to schools as hubs of community life is diminishing. In Toronto alone 43% fewer community groups are using school space in 2002 than in 1999. Increased user fees for school permits are forcing programs essential for building cohesion to close or look elsewhere. Ninety-four percent of secondary schools now charge user fees for community use, up 21% since 2000/01. And while close to 40% of child care programs are delivered in schools, the education funding formula puts the continuation of these essential programs in jeopardy by excluding them from elementary grants.

The education funding formula must be improved so that the wide range of children's educational and developmental needs can be addressed. Education funding must also recognize the critical importance of Early Childhood Education and Care programs within the education system and back the use of schools for programs that build communities.

An Affordable Housing Strategy is Needed

Stable, affordable housing is essential to achieve sustainable, inclusive communities and to ensure the health and well-being of children. However, reduced federal and provincial government support have combined to create a rental housing crisis in Ontario. Access to affordable housing continues to be a major issue in Ontario due to low vacancy rates, few new units being built, a growing loss of existing affordable units and major rent increases caused by the removal of rent controls in 1998.



Data Tabulated by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. 2003.

Beginning in 1995, the province cancelled all new social housing starts and downloaded responsibilities for existing social housing to municipalities. By 1998, the Tenant Protection Act removed rent controls on new or vacant units. The government hoped that by cancelling new social housing construction and easing the controls on rents, private developers would start to invest in new rental housing. There has been a slight increase in the construction of new private rental units in recent years, but this is more than offset by the loss of existing private rental housing due to the provincial decision in 1998 to repeal the Rental Housing Protection Act. **After accounting for the new units, Ontario has had a net loss of more than 40,000 private rental units from 1995 to 2002.** The loss of rental units came at the same time that the need for new affordable housing was growing.

Each year, more and more tenants are looking for fewer available units as the stock of affordable housing dwindles. By 2002, Ontario's vacancy rate of 2.7% was still below the 3% mark that is considered the minimum for a healthy rental market. While some communities have reported a slight

increase in rental vacancy rates, municipal social housing waiting lists - a key indicator of housing need - remain long. In some communities, renter households have to wait as long as ten years for a vacant unit. In Toronto alone, more than 40,000 children linger on waiting lists for affordable housing. Although there was some improvement in terms of vacancy rates in 2002, virtually all openings are at the higher-priced end of the rental market and remain far out of reach for the majority of low income households.

Rents have continued to rise in the vast majority of municipalities. In 2001, the average rent in Ontario for a two-bedroom apartment rose 4.1%, more than twice the rate of inflation. Rents are rising faster than inflation, but social assistance rates and the minimum wage - the main source of income for the poorest families in Ontario - have not changed since 1994. Families with children are the fastest growing group of homeless as they are caught in the squeeze between growing rents and stagnant or declining incomes.

Not surprisingly, municipalities across Ontario have not experienced any respite in the use of shelters over the past few difficult years. **Toronto has an estimated 1,000 children under the age of 12 in homeless shelters every night.** Families in the shelter system are having difficulties finding housing and are staying in shelters for longer periods of time. Shelters are not substitutes for affordable, permanent housing.

Persistent poverty and growing housing insecurity are exacting a huge toll on families. In 21% of cases where a child was brought into the care of children's aid societies in Ontario, inadequate access to housing was a factor, up from 18% in 1992. **Over the past decade, the number of children admitted to care where housing was a factor increased by 60%.**

Clearly, new housing units are desperately needed to meet the growing needs of families. Additionally, the government has failed to deliver on a promise to introduce a shelter subsidy program for all Ontarians who need help with affordable housing.

According to population estimates, 18,000 new rental units are required annually in Ontario. The private sector delivered an average of only 1,674 units per year between 1995 and 2002. The province must invest in a new housing supply program that will lead to the creation of much needed new affordable units. Ontario should additionally provide full matching dollars under the federal-provincial Affordable Housing Framework Agreement that has committed \$245 million over five years to the province for new affordable housing. Ontario is passing the provincial costs of new housing down to municipalities and housing providers, and is only contributing about \$20 million over five years.

Ensuring Access to a Post-Secondary Education

People with a post-secondary education add considerably to the skills of Ontario's workforce and Canada's human development potential. However, the doors to a post-secondary education are increasingly being shut for low-income students. **Less than half of young people from low-income backgrounds access higher education while students in the top 25% income bracket are 2.5 times more likely to pursue a university education that those at the lower end.** The use of student loans, a key indicator for determining how many students from lower-income families pursue post-secondary studies, indicates a 40% drop since 1995-96.

Government operating funds to colleges and universities have been cut dramatically in the past decade. Students are asked to carry more and more of the cost of education through tuition fees. Tuition fees, as a portion of university operating budgets, have risen from 22% in 1991-92 to 41% in 2000-2001. **Average fees for undergraduate programs in Ontario have increased by nearly 70% since 1995-96.** The rising costs of tuition and the prospect of immense student debts now pose a significant barrier to access of post-secondary education.

Funding must be injected into the system and steps taken to freeze and lower tuition fees to ensure that access to a post-secondary education is not determined by income. Ontario should also re-examine its policy with regard to social assistance recipients who pursue post-secondary studies. Ontario made recipients ineligible for welfare as college and university students and transferred 17,000 parents to student loans. Disadvantaged students face the prospect of a huge debt-load and rising fees, finding it increasingly difficult to sustain their efforts for a quality education.

Assuring Child Support

Thirty seven percent of Ontario's low income families with children are female lone parent families. The rate and duration of poverty among children in these families is disproportionately high. Ontario's system of administering child support must change to provide prompt and responsive service in processing and enforcing court orders.

Ontario's system of child support has been in disarray in recent years. In cases registered with the Ontario Family Responsibility Office, child support arrears total \$1.2 billion and the number of unprocessed court orders has reached 8,000 creating a 3-month backlog.

Far greater public policy consideration should be placed on the children who rely on support payments. Many countries have systems of child support that assure children regular and uninterrupted payments through government assistance. Action is required to develop a system that would provide Ontario's children with similar rights and benefits.

The Health and Well-being of All Children: A Foundation for Inclusive Communities

There is a fundamental link between a healthy start in life and the long-term impact on the well-being of children and society as a whole. Poverty has negative consequences for the immediate and long-term life chances of children by negating opportunities for full participation in society.

We know that low income children are more likely to encounter additional hurdles to healthy development. Research shows that children growing up in low income families are more likely to experience adverse effects such as chronic illness and disability. They are also more likely to have lower functioning levels of vision, speech, mobility, dexterity and cognition. Children living in poverty are less likely to live in safe neighbourhoods and are at a disproportionate higher risk of exposure to environmental contaminants.

There are costs as a result of neglecting the needs of children. These costs are expressed through poorer health, increased demands on social institutions and loss of economic potential. **Ensuring the best possible developmental opportunities for children and young people is not only the right thing to do, it also makes sense for the social and economic future of Ontario.**

Building Inclusive Communities: Key Investments in Children and Families in Ontario

Campaign 2000 calls on the provincial government to invest in a social infrastructure for children and families that promotes inclusive communities in Ontario and re-builds the province's collective capacity for strategic social investments. There is a need for a long term, sustainable plan to tackle child and family poverty.

Campaign 2000 recommends the following key investments:

- Raise the shelter allowance portion of Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program to average rent levels in each community. Increase basic needs allowances and index social assistance benefits to the cost of living.
- Address anti-poverty and equity policy goals by rescinding the claw back of the National Child Benefit Supplement from social assistance recipients.
- Develop a multiyear plan that ensures that every child has access to Early Childhood Education and Care services. Immediately restore regulated child care funding to 1995 levels. The Ontario government should also participate with the federal government in developing policy and funding mechanisms to implement a national Early Childhood Education and Care program.
- Restore funding and incentives to increase the amount of new affordable social housing and fully match the federal contribution to the Affordable Housing Framework Agreement. Expand rent supplement programs and strengthen rent controls and other protections for tenants.
- Increase the minimum wage to complement other public policy efforts such as the Canada Child Tax Benefit. Provide more opportunities for meaningful training and education and ensure families can earn a living wage. Increase the supply of good jobs with better wages and increased protection from job losses.
- Revise the education funding formula to address the wide range of children's educational and developmental needs. Funding mechanisms must also recognize the legitimacy of Early Childhood Education and Care programs within the education system and support the community use of schools.
- Work with the federal government to freeze and lower tuition fees by increasing investments to colleges and universities.

Take Action in Your Community

- 1 *Contact your elected officials and demand action on tackling child poverty.*
- 2 *Ask election candidates what they will do to reduce child poverty.*
- 3 *Support and get involved in organizations that are fighting child poverty in your community.*
- 4 *Speak up for vulnerable children and families in your community and in the media.*
- 5 *Visit our website regularly and join the campaigns throughout the year.*

www.campaign2000.ca



Campaign 2000 is a non-partisan, cross-Canada network of over 85 national, provincial and community organizations united in securing the implementation of the 1989 House of Commons' resolution to end child poverty by the year 2000.

Ontario Campaign 2000 is one of several provincial coalitions in the national network monitoring progress in putting an end to child and family poverty.

For general information regarding Campaign 2000, please contact Ms. Liyu Guo at Campaign 2000, c/o Family Service Association of Toronto, 355 Church Street, Toronto, ON, M5B 1Z8. You can reach Liyu or Pedro by phone at (416) 595-9230, ext. 244/241 or by e-mail at liyugu@fsatoronto.com & pedroba@fsatoronto.com

Visit our website to download this Report Card and other related information/updates at: www.campaign2000.ca

Notes

1. Latest available child poverty data is for year 2000. Child poverty data prepared by the Canadian Council on Social Development using *Income Trends in Canada 1980-2000*, Statistics Canada 13F0022XCB. Poor children are those living in families whose total income before taxes falls below the Low Income Cut-Off (LICO) as defined by Statistics Canada. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 living with parents(s) or guardian(s), excluding those who are unattached individuals, those that are the major income earner or those who are the spouse or common law partner of the major income earner. Statistics Canada data excludes those on First Nations reserves; those in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut; and children living in institutions.
2. Low Income Cut-offs (LICOs) are adjusted by size of family and community. As an example, the before tax LICO for a lone parent with one child in 2000 would be \$22,964 in a city of 500,000 people or more; \$19,697 in a community with 100,000 to 499,999; \$19,561 in a community of 30,000 to 99,999; and \$18,201 in community of less than 30,000 people. Visit the Canadian Council on Social Development's website for more information about the LICOs at www.ccsd.ca.
3. Data for Aboriginal, racialized and recent immigrant communities and people with disabilities based on *Statistics Canada's 1996 Census*.
4. Based on earner working 35 hours a week for 52 weeks in a city with population over 500,000. Calculation uses maximum Canada Child Tax Benefit for July 2002 which is \$2,672 for first child and \$2,466 for second child.
5. Low Income Cut-offs for communities with population between 100,000 and 499,999.

We regret that space constraints restrict us from providing full references in the text of this report. A report with full references is available online at www.campaign2000.ca or by calling (416) 595-9230 ext. 244.

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