

"Poverty is being teased for the way you dress" – Grade 4 Student, North Bay.

"Poverty is hearing mom and dad fight over money" – Grade 5 Student, North Bay

"Poverty is pretending that you forgot your lunch" – Grade 5 Student, North Bay

"Poverty is being afraid to tell your mom you need gym shoes" – Grade 4 Student, North Bay

"Poverty is not having pretty barettes for your hair" Grade 4 Student, North Bay

"Poverty is hiding your feet so the teacher won't get cross when you don't have boots" Grade 4 Student, North Bay

(Source: ISARC, Our Neighbours' Voices: Will We Listen?
Toronto: James Lorimer Ltd., 1998)

Low income families and children are struggling to make a life for themselves. Join us in raising our voices and calling for action. We are the hope of the future and can make a difference by acting now.



Campaign 2000 Youth Action Committee



Poverty is... pretending that you forgot your lunch"
Grade 5 student, North Bay

The Youth Action Committee of Campaign 2000 is a youth driven and motivated group focusing on work to end child and family poverty. We want to work together to make change in our communities and in the lives of all Canadians.

Poverty is defined differently depending on where you live
-In Toronto, it means ...not having enough food, not having a good home, not having stability in life. Money is always an issue because it's never available.

*** 1 in 3 children live in poverty in Toronto.**

Think of how many children could be affected by poverty in your school or your neighbourhood.

*** 41% of food bank users are children** -that's 325, 390 kids that use food banks regularly every year in Canada.

*** 1.2 million children and youth across Canada live in poverty** – that's 1 in every 6. (see 2006 Report Card on Child Poverty in Canada for more detail, visit www.campaign2000.ca)

Change is possible – you can make a difference.

What can you do??

**** Show that you support an end to poverty:** sign onto www.makepovertyhistory.ca and wear a white armband.

**** Pass the message on:** talk to 3 people about the fact that 1 in every 3 children in Toronto live in poverty & we need to do something about it.

**** Get involved:** join the Campaign 2000 Youth Action Committee. Email: liyugu@fsatoronto.com for info on upcoming meetings.

What does the Youth Action Committee do?

***** Raise awareness** through street education at events like the Toronto Urban Music Festival, Live 8, U2 concert

***** Strengthen youth voices** with 25+ schools signing onto the 'Make Poverty History' banner (www.school2school.net)

***** Spread the message** with a toolkit so schools can start their own 'Make Poverty History' group

The Youth Action Committee is supported by
Family Service Toronto
& Central Neighbourhood House.

How can we Make Poverty History?

Poverty *can* be eliminated but it requires citizen action to get government support.

Countries like Denmark and Norway have child poverty levels below 5 %. Canada is at 18%.

The United Kingdom has implemented a program to halve child poverty by 2010 and eliminate it by 2020. So far, this program is hitting the expected targets.

Canada should do the same.

We need to:

- * Raise minimum wage to a livable wage so a full-time worker is not living below the poverty line;
- * Strengthen social assistance, re-training and employment programs;
- * Increase government investment in affordable housing and child care;
- * Extend the tuition freeze and make university & college education affordable;
- * End the clawback of the child benefit supplement from families on social assistance, and increase national child benefits.
- * Ensure new immigrants can get good jobs that reflect the training and experience they bring to Canada.

Child poverty is an issue that concerns our age group-- it's our duty to stand up and act on it.