

2008 – Campaign 2000 archived news releases

[Campaign 2000 - Ontario](#) - Toronto, 21 Nov 08

Release of 2008 Ontario Report Card on Child Poverty in Toronto

TORONTO – Ontario Campaign 2000 will release the 2008 Report Card on Child & Family Poverty in Ontario on Friday November 21 at the Queen's Park Media Studio in Toronto.

The report is being released on the 19th anniversary of the unanimous House of Commons resolution to end child poverty in Canada by the year 2000.

Titled "Now more than ever... Ontario needs a strong poverty reduction strategy", the report includes the latest statistics on child and family poverty in Ontario, and recommendations for the government's Poverty Reduction Strategy due for release next month.

You are invited to --
A Campaign 2000 Media Conference
on Friday November 21, 11:00am
at Queen's Park Media Studio

Speakers: -Jacquie Maund, Coordinator, Ontario Campaign 2000.
-Dr. Michael Rachlis, Ontario Physicians Poverty Working Group
-Stacey Bowen, Voices from the Street

The national 2008 Report Card on Child & Family Poverty in Canada will be released in Ottawa on the same day. To download a copy of either report (in English and French) on November 21, please visit www.campaign2000.ca .

Ontario Campaign 2000 is a non partisan coalition of 67 organizations across Ontario committed to ending child and family poverty in Canada.

For further information, please contact:
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[Campaign 2000](#) - Ottawa, 21 Nov 08

Campaign 2000 Released Report Card on Child Poverty in Canada

Toronto - Campaign 2000 will release its annual Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Ottawa on Friday, November 21st. Federal party leaders have been invited. MP Justin Trudeau, MP Olivia Chow, MP Nicole Demers, and Green Party rep David Lewis will be available to respond at the end of the media conference.

The 2007 report, entitled Family Security in Insecure Times: The Case for a Poverty Reduction Strategy for Canada, presents the latest statistics on child and family poverty, and recommendations for all political parties. It will be released November 21st, 10:00 a.m. in the Charles Lynch Press Conference Room (130S) on Parliament Hill to mark the 19th anniversary of the unanimous House of Commons resolution to end child poverty in Canada by 2000.

Speakers at the press conference:

- Laurel Rothman - National Coordinator, Campaign 2000;
- Joe Gunn - Executive Director, Citizens for Public Justice (porte parole francophone);
- Andrew Jackson – National Director of Social and Economic Policy, Canadian Labour Congress;
- Peggy Taillon – President, Canadian Council on Social Development (porte parole francophone)

The report will be available at www.campaign2000.ca on November 21. Provincial report cards or factsheets on child poverty are also being released on November 21st in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

For further information, please contact:

Laurel Rothman – National Coordinator, Campaign 2000, 416-595-9230 Ext. 228 or 416-575-9230 (cell)

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Provincial Report Card contacts:

B.C. – Adrienne Montani or Rebecca Siggner, First Call (604) 873-8437

Alberta – Bill Moore-Kilgannon, Public Interest Alberta (780) 420-0471

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Manitoba – Sid Frankel, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg (204) 474-9706

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New Brunswick – Randy Hatfield, Human Development Council (506) 636-8540

Nova Scotia – Pauline Raven, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, N.S. (902) 542-3085

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Related site: [Campaign 2000 New 2008 Report Card](#)

[Campaign 2000](#) - Toronto, 20 Aug 08

Campaign 2000 Puts Forward Its Proposals through the Fall Federal Public Pre-Budget Consultations

Why Canada Needs a Poverty Reduction Strategy Now

Submission to Standing Committee on Finance
Pre-Budget Consultation

August 15, 2008

Executive Summary

Campaign 2000 is a non-partisan, cross-Canada coalition of more than 120 national, provincial and community organizations that has worked together since 1992 to end child and family poverty in Canada. We monitor progress on the implementation of the 1989 unanimous House of Commons resolution to end child poverty by the year 2000 and we develop practical proposals to move toward that goal.

Campaign 2000 makes the following priority recommendation:

That the Government of Canada, in cooperation with provinces, territories, and First Nations, take leadership in establishing a poverty reduction strategy for Canada, that includes targets and timetables, commitments to funding and resources and an accountability mechanism to measure progress. We suggest that the first target is 25% reduction in child and family poverty in the next five years and a 50% reduction over 10 years.

Campaign 2000 recommends these key components of a Poverty Reduction Strategy:

1. A Comprehensive Child Benefit System – With the National Child Benefit reaching its announced maximum of \$3,200 in 2007, it is important to implement the next phase. A consolidated child benefit of up to \$5,100 (2007 dollars) per child/year must be available to all low, modest and middle-income families; this benefit must not be clawed back by provincial governments from those vulnerable families on social assistance. It is estimated to cost \$5 billion and would achieve 37% reduction in after-tax child poverty rate.
2. Creation of More Good Jobs at Living Wages – Despite record-low unemployment rates, about one-third (34%) of low income children live in families where at least one parent worked full time for the entire year and still could not rise above the poverty line. We urge the federal government to re-instate its minimum wage and set it at \$10 an hour and indexed for inflation. This is an important role model for the provincial and territorial governments which, holding major responsibility, must raise the minimum wage to \$10 an

hour (2007\$) by 2008. Work tax credits must be introduced together with raises in minimum wages; Campaign 2000 calls for federal work tax credits to reach a maximum of \$2,400/year in conjunction with re-institution of the federal minimum wage to \$10/hour and restoration of Employment Insurance eligibility and protection for all workers.

3. A Universally Accessible System of High-Quality Early Learning and Child Care Services. Early Learning and Child Care services support the development of children across the economic spectrum, allow mothers to work and are a key part of a poverty reduction strategy. The federal government needs to work with provinces, territories and First Nations to sustain existing services while phasing in a federally-funded program that would grow to entitle all children access to high quality early learning and child care services from birth to age 12 based on the shared principles of quality, universality, accessibility and developmental programming.

4. Full and timely implementation of the Kelowna Accord including a focus on Urban Aboriginal issues. Campaign 2000 shares the First Nations' and premiers' disappointment with cancellation of the Kelowna accord and urges the federal government to restore it. All governments need to work in good faith to ensure that the complex needs of all Aboriginal peoples are effectively met and sufficiently resourced.

5. Significant Expansion of Affordable Housing – Provinces must work in concert with the federal government and communities to deliver 25,000 affordable housing units built annually over the next five years as the need for affordable housing is immediate and continuous. The federal government must also commit to multi-year funding for a national housing and homelessness strategy.

Why Canada Needs a Poverty Reduction Strategy Now
Campaign 2000 Brief to the Standing Committee on Finance
August, 2008

Introduction

Campaign 2000 is a non-partisan, cross-Canada coalition of more than 120 national, provincial and community organizations committed to working together to end child and family poverty in Canada. We monitor progress on the implementation of the 1989 unanimous House of Commons resolution to end child poverty by the year 2000 and we develop practical proposals to move toward that goal. Since its inception in 1992, Campaign 2000 has viewed the elimination of child and family poverty and the assurance of equal opportunities from birth for all children as key challenges for Canada. Recent experiences in the UK and here in Quebec and Newfoundland & Labrador have demonstrated that a defined poverty reduction strategy with targets, timelines and dedicated resources including public revenues can reduce poverty. The tax system and public revenues, including income transfers, tax credits and adequate public funding for income support systems and essential community services, are key to an effective poverty reduction strategy.

In recent years, healthy economic growth has not been shared equitably as evidenced by a growing gap among rich and poor in Canada. Campaign 2000 contends that a progressive and equitable nation which meets the needs of all of its citizens will ensure that economic gains are widely shared among all segments of society, thereby helping to achieve a social inclusion agenda for Canada. Statistics Canada reports that the real incomes of the richest 20% of families rose by about 10% between 1990 and 2000, while the poorest 20% of

families experienced stagnating income. (Garnett Picot and John Myles, *Income Inequality and Low Income in Canada: An International Perspective*. Statistics Canada. February 2005)

The most recent figures indicate that more than 1 million children - almost 1 child in 6 lives in poverty or 15.8% of all children in Canada (2006 pre-tax LICO figures from Statistics Canada's *Income in Canada 2006*).

A careful look at the longer-range statistics shows that we have yet to overcome the entrenchment of child poverty in Canada. Child poverty rates have historically fluctuated according to economic cycles. While it is encouraging that the child and family poverty rate went down from 2005 to 2006, more than 1 million children and their families still live in straightened circumstances. That's about the population of Calgary. The reality is that despite the economic ups and downs throughout the past 20 years, child and family poverty rates have hovered at around 1 in 6 children.

Children's poverty is family poverty. And some families are more vulnerable than others as reported in the 2001 Census (2006 data not yet available):

Children of recent immigrants ('96-'01): 1 in every 2 children lives in poverty

All immigrant children: 40% live below poverty line

Aboriginal children (off-reserve): 40%

Aboriginal children on reserve – situation likely worse but is not measured by Statistics Canada

Visible minority children: 34% live below the poverty line

Children with disabilities: 28%

The poverty rate tells only half of the story. The other half is the depth of poverty families face. On average, two-parent low income families, for example, would need an extra \$10,300/year just to reach the poverty line (2006 before tax LICO). The depth of poverty is a key indicator of distress for many families that must rely on income assistance when they are not able to participate in the labour force due to health-related issues, disability of either the child or parent(s), family responsibilities and/or the lack of accessible, reliable early childhood education and care (ECEC) services. The extent of deprivation is also reflected in stubbornly high rates of food bank use. More than 278,000 children per month – about 39% of all food bank users are children (Canadian Association of Food Banks. *Hunger Count 2007*).

Why Canada Needs a Poverty Reduction Strategy Now

Child and family poverty is persistent

Despite periods of strong economic growth and high rates of employment, the child and family poverty rate in Canada has remained stubbornly high since 1989. Canada's child poverty rate ranks as the 19th highest out of 26 OECD nations as reported by UNICEF (*Child Poverty in Rich Nations*. 2005). Despite some very important and effective achievements in child benefits, early learning and child care services and affordable housing in several provinces, governments in collaboration with communities have a great deal of work left to do to reduce child poverty. The child poverty rate is virtually the same as it was at its lowest level in 1989. The downward trend of the past few years is encouraging. Too many low income families still struggle far below the poverty line, even though the majority of parents and guardians are in the paid labour force. This is not the Canada that most Canadians want.

It must be stressed that low income children are not responsible for their situation and that child and family poverty is not inevitable. Indeed, many OECD nations have succeeded in bringing child and family poverty levels down to 5% or less while still maintaining competitive economies.

Canada's child population is barely growing

The demographic projections show us that Canada needs each of its children to grow and thrive, not merely survive. Canada has an aging population that will increasingly put pressures on the public health care, financial and support systems during retirement. The rising wave of retirements of the baby boom generation is expected to peak in 2020. The number of working-age Canadians in proportion to seniors has decreased and the decline is expected to continue. Research shows that robust support programs for families such as accessible child care and paid parental leave are linked to higher birth rates while allowing mothers to participate in the paid labour force.

At the same time, the number of children and youth under 25 is expected to decline to 9.3 million from the current 10 million by 2020. Children and youth will also account for a smaller share of Canada's population, from 32% in 2004 to 26% by 2020 (Canadian Council on Social Development. Progress of Canada's Children and Youth 2006). We will need to support and nurture all of our young people beginning in the early years and continuing through adolescence and youth as today's children, as well as immigrants, will provide the skills and energy for the workforce of tomorrow.

Many industrial sectors are already beginning to experience labour shortages, most notably in the trades. We cannot afford to continue to eliminate young people from the skilled labour force because they cannot overcome the barrier of poverty.

Poverty is making us sick

Poverty is a key determinant of health; with lower poverty, there is a healthier population of Canadians who will be ready and able to participate in society, will achieve educational goals and will replenish our labour force, becoming our teachers, trades people, doctors, business leaders and parents of tomorrow.

Reducing child and family poverty rates by increasing family incomes helps to improve the health of the population and reduce the likelihood that people will need health care interventions. Reducing poverty is a strategic investment that will reduce health care and social services expenditures over the long term. Studies including the National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth demonstrate that low income children are more than twice as likely to have problems of vision, hearing, speech, mobility, dexterity, cognition, emotion and pain. Improved family incomes would also mean that low income children would not have to rely on food banks to achieve food security and good nutrition, a key component of good health.

Dr. David Butler-Jones, Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, highlighted child poverty as one of the three key challenges for Canada. In the first Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2008, he reminded us that as a well-endowed nation, Canada has the "necessary means and talent" to ensure that individuals achieve their goals and that Canada realizes its

full economic and social potential (Government of Canada. The Chief Public Health Officer's Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2008. p. 68).

Governments have the know-how to reduce poverty

Lessons from other industrialized nations can assist Canada in developing a poverty reduction strategy that has the potential to succeed just as Canada's concerted policies for seniors instituted in the 1970s have substantially reduced poverty among those over 65 years. Poverty reduction requires explicit commitments by governments to lower levels of poverty. UNICEF (2005) has called for rich countries to adopt targets and timetables for the progressive reduction of child poverty. For countries with two-digit levels of poverty such as Canada, the UN calls for a two stage process of poverty reduction. In stage one, two digit countries would lower their poverty levels to one digit (that is, below 10%). In the second stage, one digit countries would strive to lower their poverty rates to Nordic levels of 5% or less.

Progress in the UK and Quebec and promise in Newfoundland & Labrador, Ontario, Nova Scotia

Former Prime Minister Tony Blair's daring initiative, now strongly supported by Prime Minister Gordon Brown, set out a twenty-year mission beginning in 1999 to end child poverty as part of his vision to make the UK globally competitive. The vision included partnerships with the non-governmental sector and the private sector to ensure families have income security through public benefits and through work; essential training and skills up-grading, a balance of the rights and responsibilities of those receiving benefits and a guarantee of "work for those who can, security for those who cannot." (Blair, Tony. Beveridge Lecture. 1999. as quoted in Elisa Minoff. The UK Commitment: Ending Child Poverty by 2020. Center for Law and Policy. January 30, 2006. p.2) Blair and his Labour government went on to set defined targets: end child poverty by 2020 in phases; reduce it by 25% by 2004 and by 50% by 2010. Additional targets to strengthen the quality of affordable housing, education and health services were also put forth. From 1999 to 2004, the UK succeeded in removing 600,000 children from living in poverty. While the target was 700,000 fewer children in poverty, the UK achievement remains impressive and exemplary.

Quebec's 2004 Action Plan to implement its Anti-Poverty Law built on important trends underway. Beginning in 1997, the child and family rate of poverty in Quebec has steadily declined from a peak of 22% in 1997 to 14.7% (before tax LICO) in 2006. New family supports including expansion of a universal affordable early learning and child care system, an increased child benefit and improved parental leave are key planks in Quebec's anti-poverty strategy.

Newfoundland and Labrador's Poverty Reduction Plan announced in 2007 is well-articulated and soon results will enable a fair assessment. The government of Ontario's commitment to develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy with targets and measures, facilitated by a Cabinet Committee on Poverty Reduction, will be released by the end of 2008. In Nova Scotia, too, there are encouraging developments as government departments review recommendations for poverty reduction that were developed by a working group consisting of community members and government officials

Government of Canada's role is central in poverty reduction

Canada, too, has successfully used tax measures and government transfer payments to influence poverty rates. The effectiveness of measures like the GST credit, the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB), and Employment Insurance must be highlighted. Without these public investments the poverty rate for low income families with children would have been much higher at 26% (before tax LICO) in 2005, in contrast to 16% (before tax LICO) after government transfers (Statistics Canada. Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) masterfile (1993-2005)).

The key lesson is that the impact or outcome depends on how much is invested. The Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) reached its announced maximum of \$3,200 in July 2007. It is important to implement the next phase by increasing public investment in the National Child Benefit) to a maximum of \$5,100 (2007 dollars) per child per year in order to achieve significant and sustained reduction in child poverty. Campaign 2000 estimates this would cost an additional \$5 billion and would achieve a 37% decline in the after tax child poverty rate (LICO-AT).

The recently-introduced Working Income Tax Benefit attempts to assist low income workers but does not go far enough. Work tax credits must be introduced together with raises in minimum wages; if not, the work tax credits become subsidies to employers paying poverty level wages. Campaign 2000 calls for federal work tax credits to reach a maximum of \$2,400/year in conjunction with re-institution of the federal minimum wage to \$10/hour. Campaign 2000 has also urged provinces to increase minimum wages expeditiously. Restoration of Employment Insurance eligibility and protection is essential to the prevention and reduction of poverty rates.

Campaign 2000 recommends these key components of a Poverty Reduction Strategy:

1. A Comprehensive Child Benefit System – With the National Child Benefit reaching its announced maximum of \$3,200 in 2007, it is important to implement the next phase. A consolidated child benefit of up to \$5,100 (2007 dollars) per child/year must be available to all low, modest and middle-income families; this benefit must not be clawed back by provincial governments from those vulnerable families on social assistance. It is estimated to cost \$5 billion and would achieve 37% reduction in after-tax child poverty rate.

2. Creation of More Good Jobs at Living Wages – Despite record-low unemployment rates, about one-third (34%) of low income children live in families where at least one parent worked full time for the entire year and still could not rise above the poverty line. We urge the federal government to re-instate its minimum wage and set it at \$10 an hour and indexed for inflation. This is an important role model for the provincial and territorial governments which, holding major responsibility, must raise the minimum wage to \$10 an hour (2007\$) by 2008. Work tax credits must be introduced together with raises in minimum wages; Campaign 2000 calls for federal work tax credits to reach a maximum of

\$2,400/year in conjunction with re-institution of the federal minimum wage to \$10/hour and restoration of Employment Insurance eligibility and protection for all workers.

3. A Universally Accessible System of High-Quality Early Learning and Child Care Services. Early Learning and Child Care services support the development of children across the economic spectrum, allow mothers to work and are a key part of a poverty reduction strategy. The federal government needs to work with provinces, territories and First Nations to sustain existing services while phasing in a federally-funded program that would grow to entitle all children access to high quality early learning and child care services from birth to age 12 based on the shared principles of quality, universality, accessibility and developmental programming.

4. Full and timely implementation of the Kelowna Accord including a focus on Urban Aboriginal issues. Campaign 2000 shares the First Nations' and premiers' disappointment with cancellation of the Kelowna accord and urges the federal government to restore it. All governments need to work in good faith to ensure that the complex needs of all Aboriginal peoples are effectively met and sufficiently resourced.

5. Significant Expansion of Affordable Housing – Provinces must work in concert with the federal government and communities to deliver 25,000 affordable housing units built annually over the next five years as the need for affordable housing is immediate and continuous. The federal government must also commit to multi-year funding for a national housing and homelessness strategy.

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Related site: [Latest Report Card on Child/Family Poverty in Canada](#)

[Campaign 2000](#) - Toronto, Ontario, 23 Jul 08

Campaign 2000 and Its Partners Write to Canada's Premiers

"A very great vision is needed and the man who has it must follow it as the eagle seeks the deepest blue of the sky." - Crazy Horse, Sioux Chief

We're writing to urge the Premiers to make poverty reduction central to their up-coming discussions of environmental and economic sustainability. Canada's on-going success relies upon a healthy population that can sustain itself and flourish. Our Premiers are in a strong position to ensure that all of our young people thrive, not merely survive. The Premiers, with their federal counterparts, need to use their individual and collective positions to ensure that no child or family suffers the debilitating effects of poverty. Using even a conservative measure, nearly three-quarters of a million children – about 760,000 - and their families still live in poverty in Canada despite prosperous times – that's one out of every nine children. As acknowledged in the Kelowna Accord, for First Nations, Métis and Inuit children the substantially higher rate is disgraceful. We can, and must, do much better.

Children's poverty is family poverty. And some families are more vulnerable than others. Poverty rates are disproportionately high for children in mother-led families, visible minority, recent immigrant families and children with disabilities. For children of Aboriginal identity, regardless of where they live, poverty has persisted for too long. This is not the Canada that Canadians want.

There are good reasons why poverty reduction must be part of the sustainability agenda for Canada. First and foremost, Canada's child population is not growing. By 2020, the number of children and youth under 25 is expected to decline to 9.3 million from 10 million. At the same time, First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations are growing rapidly with a birthrate that has outstripped that of the non-Aboriginal community over the last decade. One out of every two Aboriginal people is under 23 years old. As our aging population retires, the declining proportion of working-age Canadians is expected to continue. All of our young people deserve nurturing and support now as they will be the citizens, parents, workers and leaders of tomorrow.

Child and family poverty in Canada is not going away. At 11.3% the child poverty rate (most recent 2006 data based on after-tax income) remains stubbornly high and about the same as it was in 1989 when the House of Commons voted unanimously to seek to end child poverty in Canada.

Poverty reduction makes social and economic sense and will benefit us all. European countries are successfully cutting their child poverty rates by implementing coordinated action plans. Quebec and Newfoundland & Labrador are actively pursuing poverty reduction while others including Ontario are developing strategic plans. An effective poverty reduction

strategy will not be a “one size fits all” but must ensure: sustaining employment; livable incomes including for those unable to work; and strong community supports such as affordable housing; early learning and child care services, well-resourced public education and training programs. As part of this broad poverty reduction strategy, specific policies and investments that address systemic barriers are required.

Despite some very important achievements, our Premiers and federal politicians still have much work to do. Provincial poverty reduction strategies must include specific approaches to meet the needs of urban Aboriginal Peoples, and the federal government has a pivotal role regarding poverty in First Nations. The historic Government of Canada apology to Aboriginal Peoples opened the door to a climate of mutual trust and collaboration. The recently-established Truth and Reconciliation Commission will uncover facts and acknowledge the long-lasting impact of the residential schools. The most recent data show that even today low income First Nations, Métis and Inuit children, youth and their families face formidable barriers:

- 41% of Aboriginal children under 14 lived in poverty nationally in 2001, rising to 51% in Manitoba and 52% in Saskatchewan (2006 data not yet available),
- 35% of Aboriginal children were being raised by a lone parent in 2001, rising to 46% in large cities
- One in four Aboriginal lone mothers reported incomes below \$10,000 per year
- At least 80 First Nations’ communities do not have enough school space to meet the needs of their children
- Aboriginal children are drastically over-represented in the child welfare system with more Aboriginal children in the care of the child welfare authorities than ever before.

This is a crucial time for our Premiers to act. Why not show leadership by agreeing to the basic tenets of a poverty reduction strategy to be implemented in every province and territory? Fiscal capacity is strong within most governments in Canada. The prospect of slowing economic growth means that robust public policies are needed to help prevent families from falling into poverty. Timely, well-crafted attention to poverty reduction will bolster a sustainable society for all Canadians.

Laurel Rothman works at Family Service Toronto and coordinates Campaign 2000, a cross-Canada movement of more than 120 organizations fighting child and family poverty; Phil Fontaine is National Chief, Assembly of First Nations; Vera Pawis Tabobondung is President, National Association of Friendship Centres.

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[Ontario Campaign 2000](#) - Toronto, 23 Jul 08

Ontario Campaign 2000 Launches New Project with Partner Organizations

Ending Poverty Project: Building Capacity and Organizing for Change

The Ending Poverty Project has been initiated by Ontario Campaign 2000 and the Income Security Advocacy Centre to work with low-income people in 10 communities to share ideas for what's needed to end poverty in Ontario. We want to build political and public support for a broad, far-reaching poverty reduction strategy that benefits all people living in poverty.

The two-year project, which began in January 2008, involves community partners in Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Ottawa, Owen Sound and Windsor. In Toronto, the project involves youth, people with disabilities, women, racialized communities and urban Aboriginal people.

For more information please contact: Jacquie Maund, 416-595-9230x241

Funding provided by the George C. Metcalf Charitable Foundation.

Ending Poverty Workshop

ISAC and Ontario Campaign 2000 have developed a hands-on, interactive workshop that can be used to engage communities in discussions about Ontario's poverty reduction strategy and what they can do to lobby the government and build public support for reducing poverty.

Use the facilitator's guide to deliver the workshop in your community or adapt the activities and tools for your community organizing. All materials can be freely used and adapted, with credit to the Income Security Advocacy Centre and Ontario Campaign 2000.

Funding provided by the George C. Metcalf Charitable Foundation and Legal Aid Ontario
For more detail go to:

<http://incomesecurity.org/campaigns/EndingPovertyWorkshopGuide.html>

Contact: Jacquie Maund - jacquiema@familyserVICEToronto.org - tel: 416-595-9230, ext. 241

Related site: [More details on ISAC website](#)

[Campaign 2000](#) - Toronto, 21 Jul 08

Campaign 2000 responds to first-ever annual report by Canada's Public Health Commissioner

Toronto – Campaign 2000, the national anti-poverty coalition, praised the first annual report of Canada's Chief Public Health Officer which calls for a reduction in child poverty as one of three priorities to improve public health in Canada.

Dr. David Butler-Jones' Report on the State of Public Health in Canada (2008) notes that for every \$1 invested in children during the early years, government saves \$3-\$9 in future spending on health, criminal justice, and social assistance.

"Campaign 2000 is very pleased that in his first annual report Canada's Chief Public Health Officer has added his voice to the call for action to reduce child poverty, with social investments and income policies so all families have the resources needed for healthy child development," said Campaign 2000 spokesperson Jacquie Maund.

"As we move closer to a possible federal election this fall Campaign 2000 partners across the country will be pressing all federal parties to outline their plans for significant reductions in levels of child poverty in Canada."

The report, tabled in Parliament on June 18th, states that the gap between those with the highest and lowest incomes in Canada continues to grow, and poverty rates for some children, Aboriginal Peoples, recent immigrants and persons with disabilities are significantly higher than for the general population. Canada's child poverty rate is higher than in many similar developed countries.

Low income is a social determinant of health. People with the lowest incomes, inadequate housing and poor working conditions are more likely to develop poor physical and mental health outcomes.

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WORK ISN'T WORKING for Ontario Families - New Report

Poverty Reduction requires a Jobs Strategy, says Campaign 2000

Toronto – In the face of mounting evidence on the role of the labour market in family poverty, today Campaign 2000, the coalition working to end child and family poverty, joined with the Toronto & York Region Labour Council and the Canadian Labour Congress (Ontario Region) to call for the inclusion of a good jobs strategy in the provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy. Their joint report, *Work Isn't Working for Ontario Families: The Role of Good Jobs in Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy* establishes that many Ontario parents cannot achieve financial security for their families not because they can't find work, but because they can't find a good job.

"Forty-one per cent of children in low-income families in this province have at least one parent working full-time, all year," said Ann Decter, National Coordinator of Campaign 2000, "and they are still living in poverty. Parents are working hard to meet their responsibilities but their jobs don't pay enough to lift a family out of poverty. The labour market is churning out jobs and at the same time failing Ontario parents."

In March 2008, Ontario lost 25,000 full-time jobs but gained 23,000 part-time ones. Employment rates are high and parents are working more and longer hours, but the increase in non-standard or precarious work – that is part-time and contract jobs with low pay, little or no benefit coverage or security – leaves many Ontario children growing up in poverty. Data just released by Statistics Canada shows there was no improvement in Ontario's child poverty rate between 2005 and 2006.

"Low-income communities need stable, secure jobs where they earn enough to support their families" said John Cartwright, President of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council. "We heard that message clearly in community consultations last year, and we are calling on the provincial government to listen up. Addressing the need for jobs that pay a living wage is crucial for the success of Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy."

On average, an Ontario parent who loses a full-time manufacturing job and succeeds in finding new work will experience a 25% drop in income. For a family, that drop can mean a direct slide from making ends meet into poverty. Manufacturing job losses have been felt around the province. Data in the report shows that replacing a lost job in automotive manufacturing with one in retail as auto declines and retail expands would cause income to drop by two-thirds.

Work Isn't Working for Ontario Families suggests that improving labour market regulation, increasing unionization, maximizing the public benefit of public dollars and stimulating manufacturing for the developing global green economy are strategies to re-build secure livelihoods for Ontario parents and their children. Ontario's expanding service sector has the second lowest sector unionization rate in Canada, and includes much temp agency and sub-contracted work that operates outside the reach of existing labour standards legislation.

Contacts:

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Ann Decter, National Coordinator, Campaign 2000: 416-595-9230 ext 228 or 416-706-4686

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Related site: [Family Service Association of Toronto website](#)

Ontario Campaign 2000 Responds to Premier McGuinty's Comments on New Child Poverty Report

Toronto - Ontario Campaign 2000 provides the following response to Premier McGuinty's comment that the 2007 Ontario Report Card on Child & Family Poverty is using old data:

The findings of the 2007 Report Card on Child & Family Poverty in Ontario released on April 2nd are based on the most recent available income data from Statistics Canada. These data are for the year 2005.

New data, reporting on after tax income for 2006, will be available from Statistics Canada in May, 2008.

Since 1991, Campaign 2000 has been tracking child and family poverty numbers in Canada and releasing annual reports based on Statistics Canada data. As a cross Canada, non-partisan coalition we work to build public awareness of child poverty and support for government policies to address Canada's high child poverty rate.

Ontario Campaign 2000 and our 66 partner organizations across the province look forward to the release of 2006 poverty data by Statistics Canada in May. We share Premier McGuinty's hope that Ontario's child poverty rate will show a decline. More importantly, we urge the Premier to keep moving forward on his promise to make poverty reduction a political priority for his government by developing a multi- year Poverty Reduction Strategy for Ontario.

We urge his government to set a target to reduce Ontario's child poverty rate by at least 25% over 5 years, and at least 50% over 10 years.

Campaign 2000 partners look forward to the announcement of public consultations on Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

General info on Campaign 2000:

Ontario Campaign 2000 is a non partisan coalition of 66 organizations across the province committed to ending child & family poverty in Canada. See www.campaign2000.ca for a complete list, and copy of the 2007 Ontario Report Card on Child & Family Poverty with the title *The Road Ahead: Poverty Reduction in Ontario* (released on April 2nd, 2008).

Contact: Jacquie Maund - - tel: 416-595-9230 x 241

Campagne 2000 publie son nouveau rapport sur la pauvreté des enfants en Ontario

Toronto – Dans un nouveau rapport publié par Campagne 2000, une coalition ontarienne anti-pauvreté, on apprend qu'un enfant sur huit en Ontario vit dans la pauvreté (données de Statistique Canada). En cette période où le taux de chômage est bas, le Rapport 2007 sur la pauvreté des enfants et des familles en Ontario nous démontre que la solution au problème de la pauvreté familiale ne réside pas simplement dans le fait d'avoir un emploi. En effet, 70 % de tous les enfants défavorisés en Ontario vivent dans une famille dont un parent à tout le moins travaille à temps partiel ou à temps plein. Pourtant, la famille ne parvient pas à gagner suffisamment pour se hisser au-dessus du seuil de la pauvreté.

« Campagne 2000 demande au gouvernement de l'Ontario de se fixer comme cible de réduire de 25 % d'ici cinq et de 50 % d'ici dix ans le nombre d'enfants pauvres dans la province », a dit Jacquie Maund, coordonnatrice de Campagne 2000 Ontario. « Le Québec a réussi à réduire son taux de pauvreté infantile de plus de 50 % en huit ans – s'il l'a fait, nous le pouvons aussi ».

Selon le rapport, le fait de vivre d'aide sociale est une garantie de pauvreté pour les enfants ontariens. Les parents qui ne peuvent pas participer à la main-d'œuvre active et qui ont recours à l'aide sociale se débattent pour arriver avec des prestations d'aide sociale qui sont aussi peu élevées aujourd'hui qu'elles l'étaient en 1967. La majorité des enfants ontariens bénéficiaires d'aide sociale (67 %) vit dans une famille monoparentale dirigée par une femme.

« Nos enseignantes et enseignants constatent les effets de la pauvreté infantile dans leurs classes partout en Ontario », a dit David Clegg, président de la Fédération des enseignantes et des enseignants de l'élémentaire en Ontario. « Ils voient des enfants qui ne peuvent pas se concentrer parce qu'ils n'ont pas mangé de petit déjeuner, des enfants qui n'ont pas de bottes d'hiver, des enfants qui ne peuvent pas participer aux sorties scolaires et aux activités parascolaires parce que leurs parents n'ont pas les moyens de leur offrir. Nous sommes très heureux de l'engagement du gouvernement de doter l'Ontario d'une stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté et nous encourageons toutes les personnes préoccupées par la pauvreté de participer aux consultations publiques qui se tiendront prochainement ».

« Avoir un travail à temps complet et toute l'année devrait être une assurance contre la pauvreté. La stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté de l'Ontario doit voir à ce qu'il en soit ainsi. Campagne 2000 réclame un salaire minimum de 10,25 \$/h avec indexation, des crédits d'emploi pour les travailleurs et travailleuses à faible revenu, une réforme de la loi sur le travail pour protéger les employés contractuels et temporaires et enfin, une stratégie de bons emplois pour l'Ontario », à dit Greg deGroot-Maggetti du Comité central mennonite et coauteur du rapport.

« Le gouvernement ontarien doit combler l'écart de pauvreté des familles qui peinent sur l'aide sociale en augmentant substantiellement leurs revenus et en indexant régulièrement les prestations. Le gouvernement doit également corriger les règles punitives qui ont pour effet de confiner les familles dans un cycle de dépendance et les priver de dignité », a dit Jennefer Laidley, chercheuse et analyste pour le Centre d'action pour la sécurité du revenu.

« En plus d'assurer de bons emplois à salaires décents et un meilleur filet de sécurité sociale, la stratégie ontarienne doit prévoir d'importants investissements publics pour la construction de logements abordables, pour le développement d'un système de services de garde réglementés et pour l'amélioration des possibilités d'éducation et de formation – des volets essentiels pour que les familles à faible revenu échappent à la pauvreté », a ajouté Madame Maund.

Le rapport intitulé « Le chemin à parcourir : réduction de la pauvreté en Ontario » contient les résultats suivants :

Le taux provincial de pauvreté infantile est de 12,6 % ou 345 000 (données 2005 de Statistique Canada basées sur le revenu après impôt). Le taux a diminué légèrement de 2004 à 2005, mais suit une courbe ascendante depuis 2001.

Le taux de pauvreté infantile en Ontario est au 4e rang parmi les plus élevés au Canada. Quarante-quatre pour cent de tous les enfants défavorisés du Canada vivent en Ontario.

Les taux de pauvreté des enfants vivant dans des familles autochtones, racialisées, d'immigration récente et monoparentales dirigées par une femme sont le double au moins du taux provincial.

Soixante-sept pour cent de tous les enfants bénéficiaires d'aide sociale vivent dans une famille monoparentale dirigée par une femme. En 2007, le revenu familial d'une mère seule avec un jeune enfant et bénéficiaire d'aide sociale se situait à 5 357 \$ au moins sous le seuil de pauvreté.

Le revenu gagné d'une personne travaillant à temps plein et toute l'année au nouveau salaire minimum ontarien de 8,75 \$/h se situe à 3 000 \$ environ sous le seuil de pauvreté.

Visitez www.campaign2000.ca pour un exemplaire du Rapport 2007 sur la pauvreté des enfants et des familles en Ontario. Campagne 2000 Ontario est une coalition non partisane de soixante-six organismes en Ontario résolus à mettre fin à la pauvreté des enfants et des familles au Canada.

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Pour plus d'information, communiquez avec:

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Related site: [nouveau rapport](#)

Campaign 2000 Releases New Report on Child Poverty in Ontario

Toronto - A new report from the anti-poverty coalition Ontario Campaign 2000 finds that 1 in every 8 children in Ontario is living in poverty, according to Statistics Canada data. In a time of low unemployment, the 2007 Report Card on Child & Family Poverty in Ontario confirms that the solution to family poverty is not as simple as getting a job. Seventy per cent of all low-income children in Ontario live in families where at least one parent is working part-time or full-time, yet they are not able to earn enough to lift family income above the poverty line.

"Campaign 2000 calls on the Ontario government to set its target to reduce the number of children living in poverty by 25% within 5 years, and 50% within 10 years," said Jacquie Maund, Coordinator of Ontario Campaign 2000. "Quebec has been able to reduce its child poverty rate by more than 50% over 8 years – if they can, we can too."

The report notes that living on social assistance is a guarantee of poverty for Ontario children. Parents who are unable to be in the workforce and rely on social assistance struggle on welfare benefits that are as low now as they were in 1967. The majority of Ontario children receiving social assistance benefits (67 per cent) are in lone-mother led families.

"Our teachers see the effects of child poverty in classrooms across Ontario," said David Clegg, President of the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. "Children who can't concentrate because they haven't had breakfast, children who don't have winter boots and who are left out of field trips and extra curricular activities because their parents can't afford it. We're very pleased that the Ontario Government has promised to develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy and we encourage everyone who is concerned about poverty in our communities to get involved in upcoming public consultations."

"Full-time, full-year work should be a guarantee out of poverty. Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy should ensure this. Campaign 2000 calls for a minimum wage of \$10.25/hour with indexation, work tax credits for low-wage workers, updated labour legislation that protects contract and temp workers, and a Good Jobs Strategy for Ontario," said Greg deGroot-Maggetti with the Mennonite Central Committee, and a co-author of the report.

"The Ontario Government needs to close the poverty gap for families struggling on social assistance by significantly increasing incomes and permanently indexing benefit rates to inflation, as well as fixing punitive rules that trap families in a cycle of dependency and strip away their dignity," commented Jennefer Laidley, Research Analyst with the Income Security Advocacy Centre.

"In addition to ensuring good jobs at living wages and a stronger social safety net, the Ontario strategy needs significant public investment in the construction of affordable housing, expansion of the regulated child care system, and in education and training opportunities – all key pathways out of poverty for low income families," Ms. Maund added.

The report, entitled "The Road Ahead: Poverty Reduction in Ontario," includes the following findings:

The provincial child poverty rate is 12.6%, or 345,000 children (2005 Statistics Canada data, based on after tax income). The rate declined slightly from 2004 to 2005, but has been on an upward trend since 2001.

Ontario's child poverty rate is the 4th highest in Canada. 44% of all low income children in Canada live in Ontario.

Poverty rates for children – in Aboriginal, racialized, new immigrant and lone mother-led

families are at least double the provincial rate.

67% of all children relying on social assistance are in lone-mother-led families. In 2007, a single mother with one young child on social assistance had a family income that was at least \$5,357 below the poverty line.

Full-time, full-year work at Ontario's new minimum wage of \$8.75/hour generates earnings that are approximately \$3,000 below the poverty line.

See www.campaign2000.ca for a full copy of the 2007 Ontario Report Card on Child & Family Poverty.

Ontario Campaign 2000 is a non partisan coalition of 66 organizations across the province committed to ending child & family poverty in Canada.

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For further comment please contact:

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Media release: Campaign 2000 comments on 2008 Ontario Budget

The anti-poverty coalition Campaign 2000 is encouraged to see the Ontario 2008 budget include a number of measures that reflect the Government's commitment to address poverty.

These include: \$1.5 billion over 3 years for skills and education initiatives; \$100 million to rehabilitate social housing; \$135 million over 3 years for dental services for low income Ontarians, and a 2% increase to social assistance rates.

"The budget focus on skills and education is a good start to the Ontario government's work on poverty reduction. Training and education are critical pathways out of poverty, whether you're a parent on social assistance, a laid-off worker in the manufacturing sector, or a youth trying to break a cycle of family poverty," said Jacquie Maund, Ontario Coordinator for Campaign 2000.

Campaign 2000 now looks forward to the government's public consultations on Ontario's poverty reduction strategy to flesh out the initiatives needed for a long-term, comprehensive plan.

"An effective poverty reduction strategy needs to go significantly beyond organizing and aligning the current system of supports for low income people. Campaign 2000 and our 66 partners will continue to call for multi-year investments which strengthen our social safety net, ensure employment lifts families out of poverty, and expand community resources such as child care, affordable housing, education and training," stated Jacquie Maund.

For further comment:

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Campaign 2000 is a cross-Canada movement of over 120 organizations monitoring progress on the unanimous House of Commons resolution to eliminate child poverty in Canada by the year 2000.

The Ontario Campaign 2000 coalition includes 66 partners across the province.
www.campaign2000.ca

Contact: Jacquie Maund - - tel: 416-595-9230, ext.241

Media release: Poverty Reduction Missing from Budget

The federal budget passed up the chance to offer the almost 800,000 children living in poverty in Canada a shot at a better life, says Campaign 2000, the national coalition of over 120 partners working to end child and family poverty in Canada.

"It's another missed opportunity," said Ann Decter, National Coordinator of Campaign 2000. "There are provinces on the move on poverty reduction. They'll be much more successful when our federal government also steps up to the plate with a comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy. The time was right for a bold move."

Campaign 2000 repeated its call for a comprehensive national Poverty Reduction Strategy with clear targets and timetables. Both Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador have adopted Poverty Reduction Strategies, and Nova Scotia and Ontario are developing them. Federal opposition parties have also shown support for reducing poverty. Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion has promised a strategy to cut child poverty by 50% in five years, and the NDP has a Confronting Poverty platform.

"Support for poverty reduction is growing across the country," said Marie Clarke Walker of the Canadian Labour Congress. "Premiers of different political stripes are committing to comprehensive, long-term plans."

Ms. Decter pointed to polling that shows 85% of Canadians believe that if the government takes concrete action, poverty in Canada could be drastically reduced, and that 88% believe increasing the minimum wage is part of the answer.

"Canadians know we can do better, they want Canada to do better. We continue to call on the federal government to reduce family poverty by increasing the Canada Child Tax Benefit, increasing federal work tax credits, investing broadly in child care and affordable housing and supporting a comprehensive targeted plan to address Aboriginal poverty," said Sid Frankel of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

Taking serious aim at reducing Aboriginal poverty requires honouring the Kelowna Accord and making direct investment to the 117 Aboriginal Friendship Centres across the country that serve the increasingly urban Aboriginal population which is also the fastest growing population in Canada.

"A GST reduction doesn't offer much to a single mother spending almost all of her income on rent and food," said Ms. Decter. "On the other hand, increasing the Canada Child Tax Benefit would help lift her out of poverty." In November 2007, Campaign 2000 called on the federal government to increase the Canada Child Benefit to \$5,100 per year, rather than dropping the GST to 5% on January 1, 2008.

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Media release: Time for Initial Steps in Poverty Reduction Strategy

Campaign 2000 Calls for a Down Payment on Poverty Reduction in the 2008 Budget.

The McGuinty government should seize the opportunity of the 2008 budget to take initial steps on a Poverty Reduction Strategy for Ontario, said Campaign 2000, a 55 Ontario partner coalition working to end child and family poverty, in a pre-budget submission today.

"This first budget of the new term is a chance for the government to make a down payment on the promised Poverty Reduction Strategy," said Jacquie Maund, Ontario Coordinator of Campaign 2000. "With 345,000 Ontario children living below the poverty line it's time for action. A year of government planning can have a huge impact in the short span of childhood."

"We need some immediate steps in the 2008 budget on social assistance, minimum wage, and family supports like affordable housing and child care."

"Social assistance rates should be indexed to inflation so their purchasing power doesn't shrink, and we're calling for a double digit rate increase this year to bring them closer to a livable income," Ms. Maund explained. A single mother with one child on social assistance receives \$9,000 less than the poverty line.

"The minimum wage should be increased to \$10.25/hour now so that parents working full time, full year can have a living standard out of poverty." 41% of poor children in Ontario live in families where at least one parent works full-time all-year. The Employment Standards Act must be updated to ensure contract, temporary and self-employed workers have the same protections as full-time workers.

The budget should also include provincial investment in affordable housing and expansion of licensed child care spaces - key components in an effective poverty reduction strategy for families.

Ms. Maund applauded government actions to date in appointing a lead minister for the Poverty Reduction Strategy, striking a broad Cabinet Committee which includes the Minister of Finance, and working to set targets for poverty reduction in Ontario.

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Related site: [Full text of submission.](#)

Media release: Poverty Should Top First Ministers' Agenda

Reducing poverty should lead the agenda of today's First Ministers' Meeting in Ottawa, says Campaign 2000, the national non-partisan coalition working to end child and family poverty. In an open letter, the coalition urged the First Ministers to use the meeting to take initial steps toward creating a national Poverty Reduction Strategy with targets and timetables.

"A First Ministers' Meeting focused on the economy and labour force requirements should take a hard look at the fact that almost 12% of Canadians under 18 are living in poverty," said Ann Decter, Campaign 2000 National Coordinator. "Meeting labour force needs means ensuring Canadian youth are prepared for the working world, not left behind in poverty."

Campaign 2000's letter tells the First Ministers that reducing poverty and maintaining a strong social safety net are good for national economies. Three of the five most economically competitive nations in the world have the lowest child poverty rates and strong social safety nets.

Employment Insurance coverage, on the table for the First Ministers, should be part of the national Poverty Reduction Strategy. "This is a self-funded program with huge surpluses that covers less than 40% of unemployed Canadians," Ms. Decter explained. "The money is there, paid in by people who can't collect when they need it. It's hard to see the fairness of letting Canadians fall into poverty when they lose their jobs while money deducted from their paycheques sits in a surplus account."

Polls continue to show that the vast majority of Canadians believe concrete government action can drastically reduce poverty. Momentum for poverty reduction is growing across Canada, with plans adopted in Quebec and Newfoundland & Labrador, and in development in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

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Related site: [Open Letter to the First Ministers: January 11, 2008](#)